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SELECTIONS *from* AMERICAN LITERATURE

By

LEONIDAS WARREN PAYNE, JR., 1873-1945

Professor of English in The University of Texas, author of "Southern Literary Readings," "American Literary Readings," "History of American Literature," and "Selections from English Literature"

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THE PREFACE

This volume is intended to be used as a basal text in high-school classes in American literature. An effort has been made to include the major authors and some of the more important minor ones, and to give enough material to be fairly representative of the different types of work produced by each of these. No selection from authors whose works are now merely of historic or antiquarian interest has been included. The absolutely essential nineteenth-century classics have been chosen as far as length and character of the selection would permit. The apparent unequal representation in the cases of recent writers, particularly Mark Twain and Moody, is due to copyright restrictions. An effort has been made also to conform to the standard texts, but in most instances the original texts were followed. In practically every case, complete works have been given, the exceptions being the chapters from Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* and Thoreau's *Walden* and the sections from Lowell's *A Fable for Critics*, Holmes's *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, and Lincoln's *Young America*, and in these instances enough is extracted to make a unified effect and to arouse interest in the complete work.

The book includes notes and questions which are full enough to elucidate the text, pique interest, and stimulate thought, but not so full, it is hoped, as to overshadow the literature itself or prevent outside study and reference work on the part of the pupil.

My thanks are due for the courteous coöperation of the members of the reading-room staff in the Library of Congress, where the notes and sketches were prepared. I also wish to express my gratitude to the publishing houses which have given me permission to reprint certain copyrighted material: To Charles Scribner's Sons for "Song of the Chattahoochee," "The Stirrup-Cup," "Tampa Robins," and "The Marshes of Glynn," from *Poems of Lanier* by Sidney Lanier, and "Dutch Lullaby," "Little Boy Blue," and "In the Firelight" by Eugene Field; The Bobbs-Merrill Company for "Afterwhiles" and "The Raggedy Man" by James

Whitcomb Riley; Doubleday Page & Company for "The Ransom of Red Chief," from *Whirligigs*, and "The Last Leaf," from *The Trimmed Lamp and Other Stories of the Four Million*, by O. Henry; the Whittaker & Ray-Wiggin Company for "Kit Carson's Ride" and "Columbus" by Joaquin Miller.

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L. W. PAYNE, JR.

Austin, Texas
June, 1919

THE INTRODUCTION

I. The Aim of Literary Study

The tendency to reduce the study of the history of literature to a subordinate place and to exalt the study of the classics themselves has become in recent years more and more pronounced. Secondary textbooks are now combining the history with the selections, but with the emphasis largely upon the latter. This is certainly a development in the right direction, for it is vastly more important for the high-school pupils to be reading the literature itself than to be committing to memory numerous facts about the writers and their books. Of course, a modicum of literary history is necessary, especially for studying tendencies and movements and for making estimates of particular productions and authors; the historical backgrounds, social, economic, and literary, should be clearly outlined, and the distinct literary movements and stylistic fashions should be at least briefly expounded and interpreted. But by all means this should be a subsidiary and not a primary end, and certainly the pupils should be first made acquainted, through actual contact, with the best models of the various kinds of literary expression in the different periods. A handbook on the history of American literature should be provided for reference and review purposes. To supply this necessary aid the present editor has prepared a companion volume to this book of *Selections from American Literature*, calling it *A History of American Literature.*[1]

The selections have not been chosen merely to satisfy the historic curiosity as to the kind of writing that was being produced and most widely read in a given period. The study of origins and early forms is decidedly interesting and valuable to the special student of literature, and it has the same cultural value as has the study of other sorts of history; but it is unwise to ask the average high-school student to spend any large amount of his time in conning over the mere historical facts in the development of our literature. The primary or essential demand is for the use by the pupil of complete classics—the very best examples of our various literary types—with such helps as will lead him to form the habit of reading closely and such critical apparatus as will develop in him the ability to appreciate and recognize literary values. As far as possible, material should be selected which will command his interest and at the same time be of permanent value to him in training his artistic taste and developing his literary judgment. In no case should a puerile or depraved taste or a temporary fad be pandered to. The best in every kind is what our children should have, and we must not allow the child's preferences to direct us so absolutely as to make us fail to give him what is really good for him, that is, what will tend to develop and refine his taste and character.

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In the present volume the aim has been to cull from the mass of nineteenth-century American literature certain essential masterpieces which every child should know, and to present them with sufficient critical apparatus to make them easily understood and thoroughly accessible from the literary point of view. It is a well-known fact that the pupil frequently has no idea how to study an assignment in literature. His method of studying is to read over in a desultory way the required number of lines or pages of an assignment, without making the slightest effort to get below the surface into the real import and force and literary values of the piece he is supposed to study. With the proper kind of notes, study suggestions, and leading questions before him, he can easily attain some skill in making the literary attack for himself. Hence we have given in the back of this book full introductory and explanatory notes, and followed these by a fairly exhaustive list of questions and exercises, all of which are intended to open to the pupil the real literary values of the selections.

It is not intended, of course, that these questions should be followed mechanically in the recitation. The very worst possible method of teaching a classic is that by which the pupils are made to memorize notes and give mechanical answers to stereotyped questions. The helps will defeat their own end if they are ever allowed to usurp the main interest of the recitation. Let it be repeated until there can be no chance of mistake, *the literature itself is the main thing*. The notes should be used only in connection with the text, and never studied for their own sake. The questions should de similarly used only as an adjunct to the complete understanding and interpretation of the text. Most teachers will prefer to ask their own questions, but it is hoped that the exercises and questions found in the volume will at least be suggestive to the teacher, and certainly afford a guide for study and interpretation for the pupil. Occasionally the teacher may wish to select particular questions for study, and sometimes it may be wise to require written answers to be prepared outside of the class. At least enough questions should be assigned to make the pupils feel the necessity of definite preparation for class recitation. If the questions are never resorted to specifically, the pupils will soon develop the habit of ignoring them.

Minute and detailed study of a single classic is frequently advantageous, but on the whole it is better for the pupils to get the big idea or dominant impression of many pieces of literature than to be surfeited by a too minute and extended study of one classic. Many teachers make the mistake of spending entirely too much time on some single long masterpiece, like *Evangeline* for example, so that the pupils become thoroughly disgusted with it. Interminable drill and analysis will kill the spirit of the finest piece of literature in the world. Pupils like variety and progress from one type to another and from one selection to another, and when they are held too long at one task they inevitably rebel and lose their zest and interest. In many city schools the same classics are held in the course year after year and drilled on so minutely and persistently that both the pupil's and the teacher's vitality and alertness are sapped and deadened.

Again, it has been demonstrated that it will not do to force too much poetry upon young minds. Poetry is more concentrated, more suited to minute analysis, more easily taught, and hence more attractive to the adult mind of the teacher; but the child naturally prefers the less concentrated and more easily grasped content of prose. It is desirable, then, to mix the two types in some equitable proportion. An attempt has been made in this volume to give about an equal amount of prose and poetry. The poetical selections are somewhat more numerous because they are usually shorter, but the number of pages of each kind is very nearly equal.

A detailed study of the technique of verse is not desirable in the grades or in the high-school course of study, but at least the essential elements of metrics should be presented rather early in the pupil's preparation for literary study. The natural tendency of the child is to overemphasize the rhythm of poetical selections, and one of the teacher's chief aims in the earlier years is to prevent the sing-song or mechanical rendition of metrical passages. The fact that the child does want to read his poetry in this sing-song fashion is clear proof that he can be easily taught the elements of meter at an early stage, and we should always take advantage of this instinct and direct and inform him. Not many technical terms should be memorized, but the four fundamental and two occasional English rhythms and the more common matters of meter should at least be presented. The brief treatise given on pp. 631-636 will, it is believed, answer all practical purposes. It may be necessary here to give a warning against a too prominent emphasis on the mere mechanics of verse. The very novelty of the subject is likely to lead some teachers into extremes. Only a small fraction of the pupil's time and energy should be consumed in these mechanical exercises of scansion. Just enough practice to give the young reader an introduction into the mechanics of English meter so that he can recognize the different types is all that is necessary.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF SELECTIONS

A number of teachers in recent years have preferred to study literature by types instead of chronologically by authors or by literary schools, or movements, as has been the prevailing custom in the past. In the present volume we have attempted to include as many different types as was consistent with the other aims of the book, and for the convenience of teachers who desire to present the material by types we have grouped the selections in the following table under the commonly accepted rubrics. Of course, in any such classification there will inevitably be some overlapping, and the teacher must be depended upon to point out instances of such.

Poetry is classified as epic, dramatic, and lyric, and additional divisions are sometimes given to cover didactic and satiric verse. Under the epic we have placed all narrative verse, including the literary ballads. In a limited volume like the present we have found it impracticable to include drama, either in poetry or in prose. The lyric is easily divided into subordinate types, and for convenience we may classify the kinds of lyrics under five headings—namely, greater lyrics: (1) ode, (2) elegy, (3) idyl; lesser lyrics: (4) song-lyric, (5) sonnet. The more detailed classification of lyrics according to the emotion expressed, such as love, grief, nature, social, humorous, pathetic, patriotic, philosophic, religious, we have largely left to the judgment of the teacher, who may in turn secure the reaction of the pupils on this point in the daily class exercises.

The prose selections fall under one of three divisions—namely, the essay, the oration, and the story (including selections from longer narratives). Subdivisions of the first two rubrics may be made according to type, as, of the essay, formal or informal in structure; critical, philosophical, didactic, and the like, in subject-matter. The short prose narratives may be variously classified into the sketch, the tale, the short story; or again, according to purpose or aim, into stories of character, situation, local color, humor, pathos, and the like.

POETRY

I. **Epic or Narrative:** *Longfellow*, Evangeline, Excelsior, The Wreck of the Hesperus, The Birds of Killingworth; *Whittier*, Skipper Ireson's Ride; *Lowell*, The Vision of Sir Launfal, The Courtin'; *Miller*, Kit Carson's Ride.

II. **Lyric:**

1. Ode: *Bryant*, To a Waterfowl; *Whitman*, Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking, The Mystic Trumpeter; *Lowell*, The Present Crisis; *Timrod*, Ode; *Lanier*, The Marshes of Glynn.
2. Elegy: *Bryant*, Thanatopsis, The Death of the Flowers; *Poe*, Ulalume; *Whitman*, When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd, O Captain! My Captain!
3. Idyl: *Whittier*, Snow-Bound.
4. Song-lyric: *Bryant*, Robert of Lincoln, Oh Fairest of the Rural Maids; *Poe*, To Helen, Israfel, Eldorado; *Emerson*, Concord Hymn, The Rhodora, The Humble-Bee, Days; *Longfellow*, A Psalm of Life, Hymn to the Night, Maidenhood, The Arrow and the Song; *Whittier*, In School-Days, Ichabod; *Whitman*, For You, O Democracy; The Prairie-Grass Dividing, and Full of Life, Now; *Lowell*, Aladdin; *Holmes*, Old Ironsides, The Height of the Ridiculous, The Last Leaf, The Chambered Nautilus; *Field*, Dutch Lullaby, In the Firelight, Little Boy Blue; *Miller*, Columbus; *Harte*, Dickens in Camp, Grizzly; *Lanier*, Song of the Chattahoochee, Tampa

Robins, The Stirrup-Cup; *Riley*, Afterwhiles, The Raggedy Man; *Timrod*, Storm and Calm, Carolina, Spring; *Hayne*, Lyric of Action, Aspects of the Pines; *Moody*, Gloucester Moors.

5. Sonnet: *Longfellow*, Divina Commedia; *Hayne*, Composed in Autumn, Great Poets and Small; *Poe*, To Science.

III. **Satiric:** *Lowell*, A Fable for Critics; *Holmes*, The Deacon's Masterpiece.

PROSE

I. **Essay:** *Irving*, Westminster Abbey; *Poe*, Review of Hawthorne's "Twice-told Tales"; *Emerson*, Compensation, Heroism; *Holmes*, The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, Section IV, The Autocrat of the Breadfast Table, Section XI; *Thoreau*, Brute Neighbors (Chapter XII of "Walden, or Life in the Woods").

II. **Oration:** *Lincoln*, Gettysburg Speech, Young America; *Lowell*, Our Literature.

III. **Story:** *Irving*, Rip Van Winkle; *Cooper*, The Last of the Mohicans (Chapter III, Hawk-eye, Chingachgook, and Uncas); *Poe*, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Cask of Amontillado, The Purloined Letter; *Hawthorne*, The Ambitious Guest, The Great Carbuncle, The Wedding-Knell, The Great Stone Face; *Mark Twain*, The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County; *Bret Harte*, Tennessee's Partner; *O. Henry*, The Ransom of Red Chief, The Last Leaf.

III. ORAL READING OF MASTERPIECES

Finally, and by all means, the oral rendition of literary masterpieces should be insisted on in all the high-school grades. The surest test of real literary appreciation is the ability to reproduce in good oral reading the material studied. Memory work, then, becomes an essential aid in this practical exercise of oral reproduction. The pupils should be trained to do good oral reading directly from the text, of course, but a finished and final oral rendition from memory will fix the real literary values of a masterpiece in the child's mind in a way that no amount of mere cursory reading will do. A rapid sight reading of each selection, before the more detailed literary study is made, is essential to a consecutive grasp of the selection as a whole; but the final test of all the study put upon a selection is the pupil's ability to reproduce its thought content and its emotional and esthetic values by a good oral reading; and in the case of the shorter selections, undoubtedly the surest means of attaining this full literary appreciation on the part of the pupil is to demand of him accurate and expressive memory reproduction before the whole class or the entire school.

Washington Irving (1783-1859)

RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday.
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre——

CARTWRIGHT

The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore, so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse, under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a book-worm.

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned, on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say, that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected, that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk, whose good opinion is well worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes; and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal, or a Queen Anne's Farthing.

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill Mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant, (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weather-cocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word Rip was ready to attend to any body's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; every thing about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than any where else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveler. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When any thing that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!"

Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air; "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place, but supposing it to be some one of the neighborhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving each other, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large head, broad face, and small piggish eyes: the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlor of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the wobegone party at nine-pins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle!"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen: he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grapevines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors —strange faces at the windows — every thing was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains — there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—"That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay — the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed — "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears — he called loudly for his wife and children — the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eying him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted?" Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, "Whether he was Federal or Democrat?" Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the by-standers—"A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the church-yard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—congress—Stony Point;—he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and every thing's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The by-standers began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New-England pedler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks: and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon: being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river, and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to any thing else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found

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many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood, but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins; and it is a common wish of all hen-pecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE

The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart*, and the Kypphäuser mountain: the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity:

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvelous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice, and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt.

D. K."

POSTSCRIPT

The following are traveling notes from a memorandum-book of Mr. Knickerbocker:

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moons in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air: until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, wo betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the wildest recesses of the Catskill Mountains.

and took a mischievous pleasure in wreaking all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled forests and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a beetling precipice or raging torrent.

The favorite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and, from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighborhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies, which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter who had lost his way, penetrated to the garden rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with it, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day; being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaters-kill.

Washington Irving

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

When I behold, with deep astonishment,
To famous Westminster how there resorte
Living in brasse or stoney monument,
The princes and the worthies of all sorte;
Doe not I see reformde nobilitie,
Without contempt, or pride, or ostentation,
And looke upon offenselesse majesty,
Naked of pomp or earthly domination?
And how a play-game of a painted stone
Contents the quiet now and silent sprites,
Whome all the world which late they stood upon
Could not content nor quench their appetites.
  Life is a frost of cold felicitie,
  And death the thaw of all our vanitie.

CHRISTOLERO'S EPIGRAMS, BY T. B. 1598.

On one of those sober and rather melancholy days, in the latter part of Autumn, when the shadows of morning and evening almost mingle together, and throw a gloom over the decline of the year, I passed several hours in rambling about Westminster Abbey. There was something congenial to the season in the mournful magnificence of the old pile; and, as I passed its threshold, seemed like stepping back into the regions of antiquity, and losing myself among the shades of former ages.

I entered from the inner court of Westminster School, through a long, low, vaulted passage, that had an almost subterranean look, being dimly lighted in one part by circular perforations in the massive walls. Through this dark avenue I had a distant view of the cloisters, with the figure of an old verger, in his black gown, moving along their shadowy vaults, and seeming like a spectre from one of the neighboring tombs.

The approach to the abbey through these gloomy monastic remains prepares the mind for its solemn contemplation. The cloisters still retain something of the quiet and seclusion of former days. The gray walls are discolored by damps, and crumbling with age; a coat of hoary moss has gathered over the inscriptions of the mural monuments, and obscured the death's heads, and other funereal emblems. The sharp touches of the chisel are gone from the rich tracery of the arches; the roses which adorned the key-stones have lost their leafy beauty; every thing bears marks of the gradual dilapidations of time, which yet has something touching and pleasing in its very decay.

The sun was pouring down a yellow autumnal ray into the square of the cloisters; beaming upon a scanty plot of grass in the centre, and lighting up an angle of the vaulted passage with a kind of dusky splendor. From between the arcades, the eye glanced up to a bit of blue sky or a passing cloud; and beheld the sun-gilt pinnacles of the abbey towering into the azure heaven.

As I paced the cloisters, sometimes contemplating this mingled picture of glory and decay, and sometimes endeavoring to decipher the inscriptions on the tombstones, which formed the pavement beneath my feet, my eye was attracted to three figures, rudely carved in relief, but nearly worn away by the footsteps of many generations. They were the effigies of three of the early abbots; the epitaphs were entirely effaced; the names alone remained, having no doubt been renewed in later times. (Vitalis. Abbas. 1082, and Gislebertus Crispinus. Abbas. 1114, and Laurentius. Abbas. 1176.) I remained some little while, musing over these casual relics of antiquity, thus left like wrecks upon this distant shore of time, telling no tale but that such beings had been and had perished; teaching no moral but the futility of that pride which hopes still to exact homage in its ashes, and to live in an inscription. A little longer, and even these faint records will be obliterated, and the monument will cease to be a memorial. Whilst I was yet looking down upon these gravestones, I was roused by the sound of the abbey clock, reverberating from buttress to buttress, and echoing among the cloisters. It is almost startling to hear this warning of departed time sounding among the tombs, and telling the lapse of the hour, which, like a billow, has rolled us onward towards the grave.

I pursued my walk to an arched door opening to the interior of the abbey. On entering here, the magnitude of the building breaks fully upon the mind, contrasted with the vaults of the cloisters. The eyes gaze with wonder at clustered columns of gigantic dimensions, with arches springing from them to such an amazing height; and man wandering about their bases, shrunk into insignificance in comparison with his own handiwork. The spaciousness and gloom of this vast edifice produce a profound and mysterious awe. We step cautiously and softly about, as if fearful of disturbing the hallowed silence of the tomb; while every footfall whispers along the walls, and chatters among the sepulchres, making us more sensible of the quiet we have interrupted.

It seems as if the awful nature of the place presses down upon the soul, and hushes the beholder into noiseless reverence. We feel that we are surrounded by the congregated bones of the great men of past times, who have filled history with their deeds, and the earth with their renown.

And yet it almost provokes a smile at the vanity of human ambition, to see how they are crowded together and jostled in the dust; what parsimony is observed in doling out a scanty nook, a gloomy corner, a little portion of earth, to those, whom, when alive, kingdoms could not satisfy; and how many shapes, and forms, and artifices, are devised to catch the casual notice of the passenger, and save from forgetfulness, for a few short years, a name which once aspired to occupy ages of the world's thought and admiration.

I passed some time in Poet's Corner, which occupies an end of one of the transepts or cross aisles of the abbey. The monuments are generally simple; for the lives of literary men afford no striking themes for the sculptor. Shakspeare and Addison have statues erected to their memories; but the greater part have busts, medallions, and sometimes mere inscriptions. Notwithstanding the simplicity of these memorials, I have always observed that the visitors to the abbey remained longest about them. A kinder and fonder feeling takes place of that cold curiosity or vague admiration with which they gaze on the splendid monuments of the great and the heroic. They linger about these as about the tombs of friends and companions; for indeed there is something of companionship between the author and the reader. Other men are known to posterity only through the medium of history, which is continually growing faint and obscure: but the intercourse between the author and his fellow-men is ever new, active, and immediate. He has lived for them more than for himself; he has sacrificed surrounding enjoyments, and shut himself up from the delights of social life, that he might the more intimately commune with distant minds and distant ages. Well may the world cherish his renown; for it has been purchased, not by deeds of violence and blood, but by the diligent dispensation of pleasure. Well may posterity be grateful to his memory; for he has left it an inheritance, not of empty names and sounding actions, but whole treasures of wisdom, bright gems of thought, and golden veins of language.

From Poet's Corner I continued my stroll towards that part of the abbey which contains the sepulchres of the kings. I wandered among what once were chapels, but which are now occupied by the tombs and monuments of the great. At every turn, I met with some illustrious name; or the cognizance of some powerful house renowned in history. As the eye darts into these dusky chambers of death, it catches glimpses of quaint effigies; some kneeling in niches, as if in devotion; others stretched upon the tombs, with hands piously pressed together: warriors in armor, as if reposing after battle; prelates with crosiers and mitres; and nobles in robes and coronets, lying as it were in state. In glancing over this scene, so strangely populous, yet where every form is so still and silent, it seems almost as if we were treading a mansion of that fabled city, where every being had been suddenly transmuted into stone.

I paused to contemplate a tomb on which lay the effigy of a knight in complete armor. A large buckler was on one arm; the hands were pressed together in supplication upon the breast: the face was almost covered by the morion; the legs were crossed, in token of the warrior's having been engaged in the holy war. It was the tomb of a crusader; of one of those military enthusiasts, who so strangely mingled religion and romance, and whose exploits form the connecting link between fact and fiction; between the history and the fairy tale. There is something extremely picturesque in the tombs of these adventurers, decorated as they are with rude armorial bearings and Gothic sculpture. They comport with the antiquated chapels in which they are generally found; and in considering them, the imagination is apt to kindle with the legendary associations, the romantic fiction, the chivalrous pomp and pageantry, which poetry has spread over the wars for the sepulchre of Christ. They are the relics of times utterly gone by; of beings passed from recollection; of customs and manners with which ours have no affinity. They are like objects from some strange and distant land, of which we have no certain knowledge, and about which all our conceptions are vague and visionary. There is something extremely solemn and awful in those effigies on Gothic tombs, extended as if in the sleep of death, or in the supplication of the dying hour. They have an effect infinitely more impressive on my feelings than the fanciful attitudes, the over-wrought conceits, and allegorical groups, which abound on modern monuments. I have been struck, also, with the superiority of many of the old sepulchral inscriptions. There was a noble way, in former times, of saying things simply, and yet saying them proudly; and I do not know an epitaph that breathes a loftier consciousness of family worth and honorable lineage, than one which affirms, of a noble house, that "all the brothers were brave, and all the sisters virtuous."

In the opposite transept to Poet's Corner stands a monument which is among the most renowned achievements of modern art; but which to me appears horrible rather than sublime. It is the tomb of Mrs. Nightingale, by Roubillac. The bottom of the monument is represented as throwing open its marble doors, and a sheeted skeleton is starting forth. The shroud is falling from his fleshless frame as he launches his dart at his victim. She is sinking into her affrighted husband's arms, who strives, with vain and frantic effort, to avert the blow. The whole is executed with terrible truth and spirit; we almost fancy we hear the gibbering yell of triumph bursting from the distended jaws of the spectre.—But why should we thus seek to clothe death with unnecessary terrors, and to spread horrors round the tomb of those we love? The grave should be surrounded by every thing that might inspire tenderness and veneration for the dead; or that might win the living to virtue. It is the place, not of disgust and dismay, but of sorrow and meditation.

While wandering about these gloomy vaults and silent aisles, studying the records of the dead, the sound of busy existence from without occasionally reaches the ear;—the rumbling of the passing equipage; the murmur of the multitude; or perhaps the light laugh of pleasure. The contrast is striking with the deathlike repose around: and it has a strange effect upon the feelings, thus to hear the surges of active life hurrying along, and beating against the very walls of the sepulchre.

I continued in this way to move from tomb to tomb, and from chapel to chapel. The day was gradually wearing away; the distant tread of loiterers about the abbey grew less and less frequent; the sweet-tongued bell was summoning to evening prayers; and I saw at a distance the choristers, in their white surplices, crossing the aisle and entering the choir. I stood before the entrance to Henry the Seventh's chapel. A flight of steps lead up to it, through a deep and gloomy, but magnificent arch. Great gates of brass, richly and delicately wrought, turn heavily upon their hinges, as if proudly reluctant to admit the feet of common mortals into this most gorgeous of sepulchres.

On entering, the eye is astonished by the pomp of architecture, and the elaborate beauty of sculptured detail. The very walls are wrought into universal ornament, incrusted with tracery, and scooped into niches, crowded with the statues of saints and martyrs. Stone seems, by the cunning labor of the chisel, to have been robbed of its weight and density, suspended aloft, as if by magic, and the fretted roof achieved with the wonderful minuteness and airy security of a cobweb.

Along the sides of the chapel are the lofty stalls of the Knights of the Bath, richly carved of oak, though with the grotesque decorations of Gothic architecture. On the pinnacles of the stalls are affixed the helmets and crests of the knights, with their scarfs and swords; and above them are suspended their banners, emblazoned with armorial bearings, and contrasting the splendor of gold and purple and crimson, with the cold gray fretwork of the roof. In the midst of this grand mausoleum stands the sepulchre of its founder,—his effigy, with that of his queen, extended on a sumptuous tomb, and the whole surrounded by a superbly-wrought brazen railing.

There is a sad dreariness in this magnificence; this strange mixture of tombs and trophies; these emblems of living and aspiring ambition, close beside mementos which show the dust and oblivion in which all must sooner or later terminate. Nothing impresses the mind with a deeper feeling of loneliness, than to tread the silent and deserted scene of former throng and pageant. On looking round on the vacant stalls of the knights and their esquires, and on the rows of dusty but gorgeous banners that were once borne before them, my imagination conjured up the scene when this hall was bright with the valor and beauty of the land; glittering with the splendor of jeweled rank and military array; alive with the tread of many feet and the hum of an admiring multitude. All had passed away; the silence of death had settled again upon the place, interrupted only by the casual chirping of birds, which had found their way into the chapel, and built their nests among its friezes and pendants—sure signs of solitariness and desertion.

When I read the names inscribed on the banners, they were those of men scattered far and wide about the world; some tossing upon distant seas; some under arms in distant lands; some mingling in the busy intrigues of courts and cabinets; all seeking to deserve one more distinction in this mansion of shadowy honors: the melancholy reward of a monument.

Two small aisles on each side of this chapel present a touching instance of the equality of the grave; which brings down the oppressor to a level with the oppressed, and mingles the dust of the bitterest enemies together. In one is the sepulchre of the haughty Elizabeth; in the other is that of her victim, the lovely and unfortunate Mary. Not an hour in the day but some ejaculation of pity is uttered over the fate of the latter, mingled with indignation at her oppressor. The walls of Elizabeth's sepulchre continually echo with the sighs of sympathy heaved at the grave of her rival.

A peculiar melancholy reigns over the aisle where Mary lies buried. The light struggles dimly through windows darkened by dust. The greater part of the place is in deep shadow, and the walls are stained and tinted by time and weather. A marble figure of Mary is stretched upon the tomb, round which is an iron railing, much corroded, bearing her national emblem—the thistle. I was weary with wandering, and sat down to rest myself by the monument, revolving in my mind the chequered and disastrous story of poor Mary.

The sound of casual footsteps had ceased from the abbey. I could only hear, now and then, the distant voice of the priest repeating the evening service, and the faint responses of the choir; these paused for a time, and all was hushed. The stillness, the desertion and obscurity that were gradually prevailing around, gave a deeper and more solemn interest to the place:

> For in the silent grave no conversation,
> No joyful tread of friends, no voice of lovers,
> No careful father's counsel—nothing's heard,
> For nothing is, but all oblivion,
> Dust, and an endless darkness.

Suddenly the notes of the deep-laboring organ burst upon the ear, falling with doubled and redoubled intensity, and rolling, as it were, huge billows of sound. How well do their volume and grandeur accord with this mighty building! With what pomp do they swell through its vast vaults, and breathe their awful harmony through these caves of death, and make the silent sepulchre vocal!—And now they rise in triumphant acclamation, heaving higher and higher their accordant notes, and piling sound on sound.—And now they pause, and the soft voices of the choir break out into sweet gushes of melody; they soar aloft, and warble along the roof, and seem to play about these lofty vaults like the pure airs of heaven. Again the pealing organ heaves its thrilling thunders, compressing air into music, and rolling it forth upon the soul. What long-drawn cadences! What solemn sweeping concords! It grows more and more dense and powerful—it fills the vast pile, and seems to jar the very walls—the ear is stunned—the senses are overwhelmed. And now it is winding up in full jubilee—it is rising from the earth to heaven—the very soul seems rapt away and floated upwards on this swelling tide of harmony!

I sat for some time lost in that kind of reverie which a strain of music is apt sometimes to inspire: the shadows of evening were gradually thickening round me; the monuments began to cast deeper and deeper gloom; and the distant clock again gave token of the slowly waning day.

I rose and prepared to leave the abbey. As I descended the flight of steps which lead into the body of the building, my eye was caught by the shrine of Edward the Confessor, and I ascended the small staircase that conducts to it, to take from thence a general survey of this wilderness of tombs. The shrine is elevated upon a kind of platform, and close around it are the sepulchres of various kings and queens. From this eminence the eye looks down between pillars and funeral trophies to the chapels and chambers below, crowded with tombs; where warriors, prelates, courtiers, and statesmen, lie mouldering in their "beds of darkness." Close by me stood the great chair of coronation, rudely carved of oak, in the barbarous taste of a remote and Gothic age. The scene seemed almost as if contrived, with theatrical artifice, to produce an effect upon the beholder. Here was a type of the beginning and the end of human pomp and power; here it was literally but a step from the throne to the sepulchre. Would not one think that these incongruous mementos had been gathered together as a lesson to living greatness?—to show it, even in the moment of its proudest exaltation, the neglect and dishonor to which it must soon arrive; how soon that crown which encircles its brow must pass away, and it must lie down in the dust and disgraces of the tomb, and be

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trampled upon by the feet of the meanest of the multitude. For, strange to tell, even the grave is here no longer a sanctuary. There is a shocking levity in some natures, which leads them to sport with awful and hallowed things; and there are base minds, which delight to revenge on the illustrious dead the abject homage and groveling servility which they pay to the living. The coffin of Edward the Confessor has been broken open, and his remains despoiled of their funereal ornaments; the sceptre has been stolen from the hand of the imperious Elizabeth, and the effigy of Henry the Fifth lies headless. Not a royal monument but bears some proof how false and fugitive is the homage of mankind. Some are plundered; some mutilated; some covered with ribaldry and insult—all more or less outraged and dishonored!

The last beams of day were now faintly streaming through the painted windows in the high vaults above me; the lower parts of the abbey were already wrapped in the obscurity of twilight. The chapels and aisles grew darker and darker. The effigies of the kings faded into shadows; the marble figures of the monuments assumed strange shapes in the uncertain light; the evening breeze crept through the aisles like the cold breath of the grave; and even the distant footfall of a verger, traversing the Poet's Corner, had something strange and dreary in its sound. I slowly retraced my morning's walk, and as I passed out at the portal of the cloisters, the door, closing with a jarring noise behind me, filled the whole building with echoes.

I endeavored to form some arrangement in my mind of the objects I had been contemplating, but found they were already fallen into indistinctness and confusion. Names, inscriptions, trophies, had all become confounded in my recollection, though I had scarcely taken my foot from off the threshold. What, thought I, is this vast assemblage of sepulchres but a treasury of humiliation; a huge pile of reiterated homilies on the emptiness of renown, and the certainty of oblivion! It is, indeed, the empire of death;

his great shadowy palace, where he sits in state, mocking at the relics of human glory, and spreading dust and forgetfulness on the monuments of princes. How idle a boast, after all, is the immortality of a name! Time is ever silently turning over his pages; we are too much engrossed by the story of the present, to think of the characters and anecdotes that gave interest to the past; and each age is a volume thrown aside to be speedily forgotten. The idol of to-day pushes the hero of yesterday out of our recollection; and will, in turn, be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow. "Our fathers," says Sir Thomas Brown, "find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors." History fades into fable; fact becomes clouded with doubt and controversy; the inscription moulders from the tablet; the statue falls from the pedestal. Columns, arches, pyramids, what are they but heaps of sand; and their epitaphs, but characters written in the dust? What is the security of a tomb, or the perpetuity of an embalmment? The remains of Alexander the Great have been scattered to the wind, and his empty sarcophagus is now the mere curiosity of a museum. "The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth; Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams."

What then is to insure this pile which now towers above me from sharing the fate of mightier mausoleums? The time must come when its gilded vaults, which now spring so loftily, shall lie in rubbish beneath the feet; when, instead of the sound of melody and praise, the wind shall whistle through the broken arches, and the owl hoot from the shattered tower — when the garish sunbeam shall break into these gloomy mansions of death, and the ivy twine round the fallen column; and the fox-glove hang its blossoms about the nameless urn, as if in mockery of the dead. Thus man passes away; his name perishes from record and recollection; his history is as a tale that is told, and his very monument becomes a ruin.

Washington Irving

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

CHAPTER III, HAWK-EYE, CHINGACHGOOK, AND UNCAS

> Before these fields were shorn and till'd,
>   Full to the brim our rivers flow'd;
> The melody of waters fill'd
>   The fresh and boundless wood;
> And torrents dash'd, and rivulets play'd,
>   And fountains spouted in the shade.
>
> BRYANT

Leaving the unsuspecting Heyward and his confiding companions to penetrate still deeper into a forest that contained such treacherous inmates, we must use an author's privilege, and shift the scene a few miles to the westward of the place where we have last seen them.

On that day, two men were lingering on the banks of a small but rapid stream, within an hour's journey of the encampment of Webb, like those who awaited the appearance of an absent person, or the approach of some expected event. The vast canopy of woods spread itself to the margin of the river, overhanging the water, and shadowing its dark current with a deeper hue. The rays of the sun were beginning to grow less fierce, and the intense heat of the day was lessened, as the cooler vapors of the springs and fountains rose above their leafy beds, and rested in the atmosphere. Still that breathing silence, which marks the drowsy sultriness of an American landscape in July, pervaded the secluded spot, interrupted only by the low voices of the men, the occasional and lazy tap of a woodpecker, the discordant cry of some gaudy jay, or a swelling on the ear, from the dull roar of a distant water fall.

These feeble and broken sounds were, however, too familiar to the foresters, to draw their attention from the more interesting matter of their dialogue. While one of these loiterers showed the red skin and wild accoutrements of a native of the woods, the other exhibited, through the mask of his rude and nearly savage equipments, the brighter, though sun-burnt and long-faded complexion of one who might claim descent from a European parentage. The former was seated on the end of a mossy log, in a posture that permitted him to heighten the effect of his earnest language, by the calm but expressive gestures of an Indian engaged in debate. His body, which was nearly naked, presented a terrific emblem of death, drawn in intermingled colors of white and black. His closely shaved head, on which no other hair than the well known and chivalrous scalping tuft was preserved, was without ornament of any kind, with the exception of a solitary eagle's plume, that crossed his crown, and depended over the left shoulder. A tomahawk and scalping-knife, of English manufacture, were in his girdle; while a short military rifle, of that sort with which the policy of the whites armed their savage allies, lay carelessly across his bare and sinewy knee. The expanded chest, full formed limbs, and grave countenance of this warrior would denote that he had reached the vigor of his days, though no symptoms of decay appeared to have yet weakened his manhood.

The frame of the white man, judging by such parts as were not concealed by his clothes, was like that of one who had known hardships and exertion from his earliest youth. His person, though muscular, was rather attenuated than full; but every nerve and muscle appeared strung and indurated by unremitted exposure and toil. He wore a hunting-shirt of forest-green, fringed with faded yellow, and a summer cap of skins which had been shorn of their fur. He also bore a knife in a girdle of wampum, like that which confined the scanty garments of the Indian, but no tomahawk. His moccasins were ornamented after the gay fashion of the natives, while the only part of his under dress which appeared below the hunting frock, was a pair of buckskin leggings that laced at the sides, and which were gartered above the knees, with the sinews of a deer. A pouch and horn completed his personal accoutrements, though a rifle of great length, which the theory of the more ingenious whites had taught them was the most dangerous of all fire-arms, leaned against a neighboring sapling. The eye of the hunter, or scout, whichever he might be, was small, quick, keen, and restless, roving while he spoke, on every side of him, as if in quest of game, or distrusting the sudden approach of some lurking enemy. Notwithstanding these symptoms of habitual suspicion, his countenance was not only without guile, but, at the moment at which he is introduced, it was charged with an expression of sturdy honesty.

"Even your traditions make the case in my favor, Chingachgook," he said, speaking in the tongue which was known to all the natives who formerly inhabited the country between the Hudson and the Potomack, and of which we shall give a free translation for the benefit of the reader; endeavoring, at the same time, to preserve some of the peculiarities both of the individual and of the language. "Your fathers came from the setting sun, crossed the big river, fought the people of the country, and took the land; and mine came from the red sky of the morning, over the salt lake, and did their work much after the fashion that had been set them by yours; then let God judge the matter between us, and friends spare their words!"

"My fathers fought with the naked red man!" returned the Indian, sternly, in the same language. "Is there no difference, Hawk-eye, between the stone-headed arrow of the warrior, and the leaden bullet with which you kill?"

"There is reason in an Indian, though Nature has made him with a red skin!" said the white man, shaking his head like one on whom such an appeal to his justice was not thrown away. For a moment he appeared to be conscious of having the worst of the argument, then, rallying again, he answered the objection of his antagonist in the best manner his limited information would allow: "I am no scholar, and I care not who knows it; but judging from what I have seen, at deer chases and squirrel hunts, of the sparks below, I should think a rifle in the hands of their grandfathers was not so dangerous as a hickory bow and a good flint-head might be, if drawn with Indian judgment, and sent by an Indian eye."

"You have the story told by your fathers," returned the other, coldly waving his hand. "What say your old men? do they tell the young warriors, that the pale-faces met the red men, painted for war and armed with the stone hatchet and wooden gun?"

"I am not a prejudiced man, nor one who vaunts himself on his natural privileges, though the worst enemy I have on earth, and he is an Iroquois, daren't deny that I am genuine white," the scout replied, surveying, with secret satisfaction, the faded color of his bony and sinewy hand; "and I am willing to own that my people have many ways, of which, as an honest man, I can't approve. It is one of their customs to write in books what they have done and seen, instead of telling them in their villages. where the lie can be given to the face of a cowardly boaster, and the brave soldier can call on his comrades to witness for the truth of his words. In consequence of this bad fashion, a man who is too conscientious to misspend his days among the women, in learning the names of black marks, may never hear of the deeds of his fathers, nor feel a pride in striving to outdo them. For myself, I conclude all the Bumppos could shoot, for I have a natural turn with a rifle, which must have been handed down from generation to generation, as, our holy commandments tell us, all good and evil gifts are bestowed; though I should be loth to answer for other people in such a matter. But every story has its two sides: so I ask you, Chingachgook, what passed, according to the traditions of the red men, when our fathers first met?"

A silence of a minute succeeded, during which the Indian sat mute; then, full of the dignity of his office, he commenced his brief tale, with a solemnity that served to heighten its appearance of truth.

"Listen, Hawk-eye, and your ear shall drink no lie. 'T is what my fathers have said, and what the Mohicans have done." He hesitated a single instant, and, bending a cautious glance towards his companion, he continued, in a manner that was divided between interrogation and assertion—"Does not this stream at our feet run towards the summer, until its waters grow salt, and the current flows upward?"

"It can't be denied that your traditions tell you true in both these matters," said the white man; "for I have been there, and have seen them; though, why water, which is so sweet in the shade, should become bitter in the sun, is an alteration for which I have never been able to account."

"And the current!" demanded the Indian, who expected his reply with that sort of interest that a man feels in the confirmation of testimony, at which he marvels even while he respects it; "the fathers of Chingachgook have not lied!"

"The holy Bible is not more true, and that is the truest thing in Nature. They call this up-stream current the tide, which is a thing soon explained, and clear enough. Six hours the waters run in, and six hours they run out, and the reason is this: when there is higher water in the sea than in the river, they run in until the river gets to be highest, and then it runs out again."

"The waters in the woods, and on the great lakes, run downward until they lie like my hand," said the Indian, stretching the limb horizontally before him, "and then they run no more."

"No honest man will deny it," said the scout, a little nettled at the implied distrust of his explanation of the mystery of the tides: "and I grant that it is true on the small scale, and where the land is level. But everything depends on what scale you look at things. Now, on the small scale, the 'arth is level; but on the large scale it is round. In this manner, pools and ponds, and even the great fresh-water lakes, may be stagnant, as you and I both know they are, having seen them; but when you come to spread water over a great tract, like the sea, where the earth is round, how in reason can the water be quiet? You might as well expect the river to lie still on the brink of those black rocks a mile above us, though your own ears tell you that it is tumbling over them at this very moment!"

If unsatisfied by the philosophy of his companion, the Indian was far too dignified to betray his unbelief. He listened like one who was convinced, and resumed his narrative in his former solemn manner.

"We came from the place where the sun is hid at night, over great plains where the buffaloes live, until we reached the big river. There we fought the Alligewi till the ground was red with their blood. From the banks of the big river to the shores of the salt lake, there was none to meet us. The Maquas followed at a distance. We said the country should be ours from the place where the water runs up no longer on this stream to a river twenty suns' journey towards the summer. The land we had taken like warriors we kept like men. We drove the Maquas into the woods with the bears. They only tasted salt at the licks; they drew no fish from the great lake: we threw them the bones."

"All this I have heard and believe," said the white man, observing that the Indian paused: "but it was long before the English came into the country."

"A pine grew then where this chestnut now stands. The first pale-faces who came among us spoke no English. They came in a large canoe, when my fathers had buried the tomahawk with the red men around them. Then, Hawk-eye," he continued, betraying his deep emotion, only by permitting his voice to fall to those low, guttural tones, which render his language, as spoken at times, so very musical; "then, Hawk-eye, we were one people, and we were happy. The salt lake gave us its fish, the wood its deer, and the air its birds. We took wives who bore us children; we worshipped the Great Spirit; and we kept the Maquas beyond the sound of our songs of triumph!"

"Know you anything of your own family at that time?" demanded the white. "But you are a just man, for an Indian! and, as I suppose you hold their gifts, your fathers must have been brave warriors, and wise men at the council fire."

"My tribe is the grandfather of nations, but I am an unmixed man. The blood of chiefs is in my veins, where it must stay for ever. The Dutch landed, and gave my people the fire-water; they drank until the heavens and the earth seemed to meet, and they foolishly thought they had found the Great Spirit. Then they parted with their land. Foot by foot, they were driven back from the shores, until I, that am a chief and a Sagamore, have never seen the sun shine but through the trees, and have never visited the graves of my fathers!"

"Graves bring solemn feelings over the mind," returned the scout, a good deal touched at the calm suffering of his companion; "and they often aid a man in his good intentions; though, for myself, I expect to leave my own bones unburied to bleach in the woods or to be torn asunder by the wolves. But where are to be found those of your race who came to their kin in the Delaware country, so many summers since?"

"Where are the blossoms of those summers!—fallen, one by one: so all of my family departed, each in his turn, to the land of spirits. I am on the hill-top, and must go down into the valley; and when Uncas follows in my footsteps, there will no longer be any of the blood of the Sagamores, for my boy is the last of the Mohicans."

"Uncas is here!" said another voice, in the same soft, guttural tones, near his elbow; "who speaks to Uncas?"

The white man loosened his knife in his leathern sheath, and made an involuntary movement of the hand towards his rifle, at this sudden interruption; but the Indian sat composed, and without turning his head at the unexpected sounds.

At the next instant, a youthful warrior passed between them, with a noiseless step, and seated himself on the bank of the rapid stream. No exclamation of surprise escaped the father, nor was any question asked, or reply given, for several minutes; each appearing to await the moment when he might speak, without betraying womanish curiosity or childish impatience. The white man seemed to take counsel from their customs, and, relinquishing his grasp of the rifle, he also remained silent and reserved. At length Chingachgook turned his eyes slowly towards his son and demanded—

"Do the Maquas dare to leave the print of their moccasins in these woods?"

"I have been on their trail," replied the young Indian, "and know that they number as many as the fingers of my two hands; but they lie hid like cowards."

"The thieves are out-lying for scalps and plunder!" said the white man, whom we shall call Hawk-eye, after the manner of his companions. "That busy Frenchman, Montcalm, will send his spies into our very camp, but he will know what road we travel!"

"'Tis enough!" returned the father, glancing his eye towards the setting sun; "they shall be driven like deer from their bushes. Hawk-eye, let us eat to-night, and show the Maquas that we are men to-morrow."

"I am as ready to do the one as the other: but to fight the Iroquois 'tis necessary to find the skulkers; and to eat, 'tis necessary to get the game—talk of the devil and he will come; there is a pair of the biggest antlers I have seen this season moving the bushes below the hill! Now, Uncas," he continued in a half whisper, and laughing with a kind of inward sound, like one who had learnt to be watchful, "I will bet my charger three times full of powder, against a foot of wampum, that I take him atwixt the eyes, and nearer to the right than to the left."

"It cannot be!" said the young Indian, springing to his feet with youthful eagerness; "all but the tips of his horns are hid!"

"He's a boy!" said the white man, shaking his head while he spoke, and addressing the father. "Does he think when a hunter sees a part of the creatur' he can't tell where the rest of him should be!"

Adjusting his rifle, he was about to make an exhibition of that skill, on which he so much valued himself, when the warrior struck up the piece with his hand, saying,

"Hawk-eye! will you fight the Maquas?"

"These Indians know the nature of the woods, as it might be by instinct!" returned the scout, dropping his rifle, and turning away like a man who was convinced of his error. "I must leave the buck to your arrow, Uncas, or we may kill a deer for them thieves, the Iroquois, to eat."

The instant the father seconded this intimation by an expressive gesture of the head, Uncas threw himself on the ground and approached the animal with wary movements. When within a few yards of the cover, he fitted an arrow to his bow with the utmost care, while the antlers moved, as if their owner snuffed an enemy in the tainted air. In another moment the twang of the cord was heard, a white streak was seen glancing into the bushes, and the wounded buck plunged from the cover, to the very feet of his hidden enemy. Avoiding the horns of the infuriated animal, Uncas darted to his side, and passed his knife across the throat when, bounding to the edge of the river, it fell, dyeing the waters with its blood.

" 'T was done with Indian skill," said the scout, laughing inwardly, but with vast satisfaction; "and 't was a pretty sight to behold! Though an arrow is a near shot, and needs a knife to finish the work."

"Hugh!" ejaculated his companion, turning quickly, like a hound who scented game.

"By the Lord, here is a drove of them!" exclaimed the scout, whose eyes began to glisten with the ardor of his usual occupation; "if they come within range of a bullet I will drop one, though the whole Six Nations should be lurking within sound! What do you hear, Chingachgook? for to my ears the woods are dumb."

"There is but one deer, and he is dead," said the Indian, bending his body till his ear nearly touched the earth. "I hear the sounds of feet!"

"Perhaps the wolves have driven the buck to shelter, and are following on his trail."

"No. The horses of white men are coming!" returned the other, raising himself with dignity, and resuming his seat on the log with his former composure. "Hawk-eye, they are your brothers; speak to them."

"That will I, and in English that the king need n't be ashamed to answer," returned the hunter, speaking in the language of which he boasted; "but I see nothing, nor do I hear the sounds of man or beast; 'tis strange that an Indian should understand white sounds better than a man who, his very enemies will own, has no cross in his blood, although he may have lived with the red skins long enough to be suspected! Ha! there goes something like the cracking of a dry stick, too—now I hear the bushes move—yes, yes, there is a trampling that I mistook for the falls—and—but here they come themselves; God keep them from the Iroquois!"

James Fenimore Cooper

William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

THANATOPSIS

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air,—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, traverse Barca's desert sands,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train

Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man,—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

William Cullen Bryant

TO A WATERFOWL

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly limned upon the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—

The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

William Cullen Bryant

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves lie dead;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprang and stood
In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook in autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone, from upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty died,
The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my side.
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forests cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief:
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

William Cullen Bryant

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly dressed,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

William Cullen Bryant

"OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS"

Oh fairest of the rural maids!
Thy birth was in the forest shades;
Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,
Were ever in the sylvan wild;
And all the beauty of the place
Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
Is in the light shade of thy locks;
Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
Its playful way among the leaves.

Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene
And silent waters heaven is seen;
Their lashes are the herbs that look
On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
Are not more sinless than thy breast;
The holy peace, that fills the air
Of those calm solitudes, is there.

William Cullen Bryant

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

OUT OF THE CRADLE ENDLESSLY ROCKING

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the Ninth-month midnight,
Over the sterile sands and the fields beyond, where the child leaving his bed wander'd alone, bareheaded, barefoot,
Down from the shower'd halo,
Up from the mystic play of shadows twining and twisting as if they were alive,
Out from the patches of briers and blackberries,
From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
From your memories sad brother, from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
From under that yellow half-moon late-risen and swollen as if with tears,
From those beginning notes of yearning and love there in the mist,
From the thousand responses of my heart never to cease,
From the myriad thence-arous'd words,
From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
From such as now they start the scene revisiting,
As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
Borne hither, ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
A man, yet by these tears a little boy again,
Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter,
Taking all hints to use them, but swiftly leaping beyond them,
A reminiscence sing.

Once Paumanok,
When the lilac-scent was in the air and Fifth-month grass was growing,

Up this seashore in some briers,
Two feather'd guests from Alabama, two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted with brown,
And every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand,
And every day the she-bird crouch'd on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great sun!
While we bask, we two together.

Two together!
Winds blow south or winds blow north,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
While we two keep together.

Till of a sudden,
May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,
Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appear'd again.

And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the sea,
And at night under the full of the moon in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

Blow! blow! blow!
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me.

Yes, when the stars glisten'd,
All night long on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,
Down almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer wonderful causing tears.

He call'd on his mate,
He pour'd forth the meanings which I of all men know.

Yes, my brother I know,
The rest might not, but I have treasur'd every note,
For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
Listen'd long and long;

Listen'd to keep, to sing, now translating the notes,
Following you my brother.

Soothe! soothe! soothe!
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me, not me.

Low hangs the moon, it rose late,
It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.

O madly the sea pushes upon the land,
With love, with love.

O night! do I not see my love fluttering out among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?

Loud! loud! loud!
Loud I call to you, my love!

High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love.

Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon do not keep her from me any longer.

Land! land! O land!
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again if you only would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.

O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.

O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.

Shake out carols!
Solitary here, the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O under that moon where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless despairing carols.

But soft! sink low!
Soft! let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment you husky-nois'd sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,

So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.

Hither my love!
Here I am! here!
With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.

Do not be decoy'd elsewhere,
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice,
That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.

O darkness! O in vain!
O I am very sick and sorrowful.

O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.

O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!
In the air, in the woods, over fields,
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!
But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more.

The aria sinking,
All else continuing, the stars shining,
The winds blowing, the notes of the bird continuous echoing,
With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly moaning,
On the sands of Paumanok's shore gray and rustling,
The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the sea almost touching,
The boy ecstatic, with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the atmosphere dallying,

The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously bursting,
The aria's meaning, the ears, the soul, swiftly depositing,
The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,
The colloquy there, the trio, each uttering,
The undertone, the savage old mother incessantly crying,
To the boy's soul's questions sullenly timing, some drown'd secret hissing,
To the outsetting bard.

Demon or bird! (said the boy's soul,)
Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it really to me?
For I, that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping, now I have heard you,
Now in a moment I know what I am for, I awake,
And already a thousand singers, a thousand songs, clearer, louder, and more sorrowful than yours,
A thousand warbling echoes have started to life within me, never to die.

O you singer solitary, singing by yourself, projecting me,
O solitary me listening, never more shall I cease perpetuating you,
Never more shall I escape, never more the reverberations,
Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent from me,
Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was before what there in the night,
By the sea under the yellow and sagging moon,
The messenger there arous'd, the fire, the sweet hell within,
The unknown want, the destiny of me.

O give me the clew! (it lurks in the night here somewhere,)
O if I am to have so much, let me have more!

A word then, (for I will conquer it,)
The word final, superior to all,

Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;
Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea-waves?
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

Whereto answering, the sea,
Delaying not, hurrying not,
Whisper'd me through the night, and very plainly before daybreak,
Lisp'd to me the low and delicious word death
And again death, death, death, death,
Hissing melodious, neither like the bird nor like my arous'd child's heart,
But edging near as privately for me rustling at my feet,
Creeping thence steadily up to my ears and laving me softly all over,
Death, death, death, death, death.

Which I do not forget,
But fuse the song of my dusky demon and brother,
That he sang to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,
With the thousand responsive songs at random,
My own songs awaked from that hour,
And with them the key, the word up from the waves,
The word of the sweetest song and all songs,
That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet,
(Or like some old crone rocking the cradle, swathed in sweet garments, bending aside,)
The sea whisper'd me.

Walt Whitman

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM'D

I

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

2

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappear'd—O the black murk that hides the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

3

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-wash'd palings,
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break.

4

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life, (for well dear brother I know,
If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die.)

5

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets peep'd from the ground, spotting the gray debris,
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown fields uprisen,
Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the orchards,
Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

6

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
Through day and night with the great cloud darkening the land,
With the pomp of the inloop'd flags with the cities draped in black,
With the show of the States themselves as of crape-veil'd women standing,
With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces and the unbared heads,
With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the sombre faces,
With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong and solemn,
With all the mournful voices of the dirges pour'd around the coffin,
The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where amid these you journey,

With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,
Here, coffin that slowly passes,
I give you my sprig of lilac.

7

(Nor for you, for one alone,
Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,
For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you,
    O sane and sacred death.

All over bouquets of roses,
O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,
But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,
With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
For you and the coffins all of you, O death.)

8

O western orb sailing the heaven,
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I
    walk'd,
As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night
    after night,
As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side,
    (while the other stars all look'd on,)
As we wander'd together the solemn night, (for something I
    know not what kept me from sleep,)
As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how
    full you were of woe,
As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool
    transparent night,
As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the netherward
    black of the night,
As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you sad
    orb,
Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

9

Sing on there in the swamp,
O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your call,
I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detain'd me,
The star my departing comrade holds and detains me.

10

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?
And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone?
And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,
Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western sea, till there on the prairies meeting,
These and with these and the breath of my chant,
I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

11

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke lucid and bright,
With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning, expanding the air,
With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green leaves of the trees prolific,
In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here and there,
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows.

And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
And all the scenes of life and the workshops and the workmen homeward returning.

12

Lo, body and soul—this land,
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the ships,
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light, Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,
And ever the far-spreading prairies cover'd with grass and corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,
The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
The gentle soft-born measureless light,
The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfill'd noon,
The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

13

Sing on, sing on, you gray-brown bird,
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.

Sing on, dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.

O liquid and free and tender!
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!
You only I hear—yet the star holds me, (but will soon depart,)
Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

14

Now while I sat in the day and look'd forth,
In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring, and the farmers preparing their crops,

In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests,
In the heavenly aerial beauty, (after the perturb'd winds and the storms,)
Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of children and women,
The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sail'd,
And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labor,
And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and minutia of daily usages,
And the streets how their throbbings throbb'd, and the cities pent—lo, then and there,
Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail,
And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands of companions,
I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the dimness,
To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.

And the singer so shy to the rest receiv'd me,
The gray-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three,
And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

Come, lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.

Approach, strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee, O vast and well-veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee,O death.

15

To the tally of my soul,
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
With pure deliberate notes spreading, filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp-perfume,
And I with my comrades there in the night;

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions.

And I saw askant the armies,
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierc'd with missiles I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs (and all in silence,)
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the debris and debris of all the slain soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought,
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffer'd not,
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffer'd,
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

16

Passing the visions, passing the night,
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song,
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and yet again bursting with joy,
Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,
Passing, I leave thee, lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
I leave thee there in the dooryard, blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul,
With the lustrous and drooping star, with the countenance full of woe,
With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,
Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

Walt Whitman

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

1865 *Walt Whitman*

THE MYSTIC TRUMPETER

1

Hark, some wild trumpeter, some strange musician,
Hovering unseen in air, vibrates capricious tunes to-night.

I hear thee trumpeter, listening alert I catch thy notes,
Now pouring, whirling like a tempest round me,
Now low, subdued, now in the distance lost.

2

Come nearer bodiless one, haply in thee resounds
Some dead composer, haply thy pensive life
Was fill'd with aspirations high, unform'd ideals,
Waves, oceans musical, chaotically surging,
That now ecstatic ghost, close to me bending, thy cornet echoing, pealing,
Gives out to no one's ears but mine, but freely gives to mine,
That I may thee translate.

3

Blow trumpeter free and clear, I follow thee,
While at thy liquid prelude, glad, serene,
The fretting world, the streets, the noisy hours of day withdraw,
A holy calm descends like dew upon me,
I walk in cool refreshing night the walks of paradise,
I scent the grass, the moist air and the roses;
Thy song expands my numb'd imbonded spirit, thou freest, launchest me,
Floating and basking upon heaven's lake.

4

Blow again trumpeter! and for my sensuous eyes,
Bring the old pageants, show the feudal world.

What charm thy music works! thou makest pass before me,
Ladies and cavaliers long dead, barons are in their castle halls, the troubadours are singing,

Arm'd knights go forth to redress wrongs, some in quest of the holy Graal;
I see the tournament, I see the contestants incased in heavy armor seated on stately champing horses,
I hear the shouts, the sounds of blows and smiting steel;
I see the Crusaders' tumultuous armies—hark, how the cymbals clang,
Lo, where the monks walk in advance, bearing the cross on high.

5

Blow again trumpeter! and for thy theme,
Take now the enclosing theme of all, the solvent and the setting,
Love, that is pulse of all, the sustenance and the pang,
The heart of man and woman all for love;
No other theme but love — knitting, enclosing, all-diffusing love.

O how the immortal phantoms crowd around me!
I see the vast alembic ever working, I see and know the flames that heat the world,
The glow, the blush, the beating hearts of lovers,
So blissful happy some, and some so silent, dark, and nigh to death;
Love, that is all the earth to lovers—love, that mocks time and space,
Love, that is day and night—love, that is sun and moon and stars,
Love, that is crimson, sumptuous, sick with perfume,
No other words but words of love, no other thought but love.

6

Blow again trumpeter— conjure war's alarums.

Swift to thy spell a shuddering hum like distant thunder rolls,
Lo, where the arm'd men hasten—lo, mid the clouds of dust the glint of bayonets,

I see the grime-faced cannoneers, I mark the rosy flash amid the smoke, I hear the cracking of the guns;
Nor war alone—thy fearful music-song, wild player, brings every sight of fear,
The deeds of ruthless brigands, rapine, murder—I hear the cries for help!
I see ships foundering at sea, I behold on deck and below deck the terrible tableaus.

7

O trumpeter, methinks I am myself the instrument thou playest,
Thou melt'st my heart, my brain—thou movest, drawest, changest them at will;
And now thy sullen notes send darkness through me,
Thou takest away all cheering light, all hope,
I see the enslaved, the overthrown, the hurt, the opprest of the whole earth,
I feel the measureless shame and humiliation of my race, it becomes all mine,
Mine too the revenges of humanity, the wrongs of ages, baffled feuds and hatreds,
Utter defeat upon me weighs—all lost—the foe victorious,
(Yet mid the ruins Pride colossal stands unshaken to the last,
Endurance, resolution to the last.)

8

Now trumpeter for thy close,
Vouchsafe a higher strain than any yet,
Sing to my soul, renew its languishing faith and hope,
Rouse up my slow belief, give me some vision of the future,
Give me for once its prophecy and joy.

O glad, exulting, culminating song!
A vigor more than earth's is in thy notes,
Marches of victory—man disenthral'd—the conqueror at last,

Hymns to the universal God from universal man—all joy!
A reborn race appears—a perfect world, all joy!
Women and men in wisdom innocence and health—all joy!
Riotous laughing bacchanals fill'd with joy!
War, sorrow, suffering gone—the rank earth purged—nothing but joy left!
The ocean fill'd with joy—the atmosphere all joy!
Joy! joy! in freedom, worship, love! joy in the ecstasy of life!
Enough to merely be! enough to breathe!
Joy! joy! all over joy!

Walt Whitman

FOR YOU, O DEMOCRACY

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble;
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever yet shone upon;
I will make divine magnetic lands,
        With the love of comrades,
            With the life-long love of comrades.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies;
I will make inseparable cities, with their arms about each other's necks;
        By the love of comrades,
            By the manly love of comrades.

For you these, from me, O Democracy, to serve you, ma femme!
For you! for you, I am trilling these songs,
        In the love of comrades,
            In the high-towering love of comrades.

Walt Whitman

THE PRAIRIE-GRASS DIVIDING

The prairie-grass dividing—its special odor breathing,
I demand of it the spiritual corresponding,
Demand the most copious and close companionship of men,
Demand the blades to rise of words, acts, beings,
Those of the open atmosphere, coarse, sunlit, fresh, nutritious,
Those that go their own gait, erect, stepping with freedom and command—leading, not following,
Those with a never-quell'd audacity—those with sweet and lusty flesh, clear of taint,
Those that look carelessly on the face of Presidents and Governors, as to say, *Who are you?*
Those of earth-born passion, simple, never constrain'd, never obedient,
Those of inland America.

Walt Whitman

FULL OF LIFE, NOW

Full of life, now, compact, visible,
I, forty years old the Eighty-third Year of The States,
To one a century hence, or any number of centuries hence,
To you, yet unborn, these, seeking you.

When you read these, I, that was visible, am become invisible;
Now it is you, compact, visible, realizing my poems, seeking me;
Fancying how happy you were, if I could be with you, and become your comrade;
Be it as if I were with you. (Be not too certain but I am now with you.)

Walt Whitman

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

HEROISM

"Paradise is under the shadow of swords."
MAHOMET

Ruby wine is drunk by knaves,
Sugar spends to fatten slaves,
Rose and vine-leaf deck buffoons;
Thunderclouds are Jove's festoons,
Drooping oft in wreaths of dread
Lightning-knotted round his head;
The hero is not fed on sweets,
Daily his own heart he eats;
Chambers of the great are jails,
And head-winds right for royal sails.

[1] In the elder English dramatists, and mainly in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, there is a constant recognition of gentility, as if a noble behavior were as easily marked in the society of their age as color is in our American population. When any Rodrigo, Pedro or Valerio enters, though he be a stranger, the duke or governor exclaims, 'This is a gentleman,'—and proffers civilities without end; but all the rest are slag and refuse. In harmony with this delight in personal advantages there is in their plays a certain heroic cast of character and dialogue,—as in Bonduca, Sophocles, the Mad Lover, the Double Marriage,—wherein the speaker is so earnest and cordial and on such deep grounds of character, that the dialogue, on the slightest additional incident in the plot, rises naturally into poetry. Among many texts take the following. The Roman Martius has conquered Athens,—all but the invincible spirits of Sophocles, the duke of Athens, and Dorigen, his wife. The beauty of the latter inflames Martius, and he seeks to save her husband; but Sophocles will not ask his life, although assured that a word will save him, and the execution of both proceeds:—

Valerius. Bid thy wife farewell.
Soph. No, I will take no leave. My Dorigen,
Yonder, above, 'bout Ariadne's crown,
My spirit shall hover for thee. Prithee, haste.
Dor. Stay, Sophocles,—with this tie up my sight;
Let not soft nature so transformed be,
And lose her gentler sexed humanity,
To make me see my lord bleed. So, 't is well;
Never one object underneath the sun
Will I behold before my Sophocles:
Farewell; now teach the Romans how to die.
Mar. Dost know what 't is to die?
Soph. Thou dost not, Martius,
And, therefore, not what 't is to live; to die
Is to begin to live. It is to end
An old, stale, weary work and to commence
A newer and a better. 'T is to leave
Deceitful knaves for the society
Of gods and goodness. Thou thyself must part
At last from all thy garlands, pleasures, triumphs,
And prove thy fortitude what then 't will do.
Val. But art not grieved nor vexed to leave thy life thus?
Soph. Why should I grieve or vex for being sent
To them I ever loved best? Now I'll kneel,
But with my back toward thee: 't is the last duty
This trunk can do the gods.
Mar. Strike, strike, Valerius,
Or Martius' heart will leap out at his mouth.
This is a man, a woman. Kiss thy lord,
And live with all the freedom you were wont.
O love! thou doubly hast afflicted me
With virtue and with beauty. Treacherous heart,
My hand shall cast thee quick into my urn,
Ere thou transgress this knot of piety.
Val. What ails my brother?
Soph. Martius, O Martius,
Thou now hast found a way to conquer me.
Dor. O star of Rome! what gratitude can speak
Fit words to follow such a deed as this?
Mar. This admirable duke, Valerius,
With his disdain of fortune and of death,
Captived himself, has captivated me,
And though my arm hath ta'en his body here,
His soul hath subjugated Martius' soul.
By Romulus, he is all soul, I think;
He hath no flesh, and spirit cannot be gyved,
Then we have vanquished nothing; he is free,
And Martius walks now in captivity.

[2] I do not readily remember any poem, play, sermon, novel or oration that our press vents in the last few years, which goes to the same tune. We have a great many flutes

and flageolets, but not often the sound of any fife. Yet Wordsworth's "Laodamia," and the ode of "Dion," and some sonnets, have a certain noble music; and Scott will sometimes draw a stroke like the portrait of Lord Evandale given by Balfour of Burley. Thomas Carlyle, with his natural taste for what is manly and daring in character, has suffered no heroic trait in his favorites to drop from his biographical and historical pictures. Earlier, Robert Burns has given us a song or two. In the Harleian Miscellanies there is an account of the battle of Lutzen which deserves to be read. And Simon Ockley's History of the Saracens recounts the prodigies of individual valor, with admiration all the more evident on the part of the narrator that he seems to think that his place in Christian Oxford requires of him some proper protestations of abhorrence. But if we explore the literature of Heroism we shall quickly come to Plutarch, who is its Doctor and historian. To him we owe the Brasidas, the Dion, the Epaminondas, the Scipio of old, and I must think we are more deeply indebted to him than to all the ancient writers. Each of his "Lives" is a refutation to the despondency and cowardice of our religious and political theorists. A wild courage, a Stoicism not of the schools but of the blood, shines in every anecdote, and has given that book its immense fame.

[3] We need books of this tart cathartic virtue more than books of political science or of private economy. Life is a festival only to the wise. Seen from the nook and chimney-side of prudence, it wears a ragged and dangerous front. The violations of the laws of nature by our predecessors and our contemporaries are punished in us also. The disease and deformity around us certify the infraction of natural, intellectual and moral laws, and often violation on violation to breed such compound misery. A lock-jaw that bends a man's head back to his heels; hydrophobia that makes him bark at his wife and babes; insanity that makes him eat grass; war, plague, cholera, famine, indicate a certain

ferocity in nature, which, as it had its inlet by human crime, must have its outlet by human suffering. Unhappily no man exists who has not in his own person become to some amount a stockholder in the sin, and so made himself liable to a share in the expiation.

[4] Our culture therefore must not omit the arming of the man. Let him hear in season that he is born into the state of war, and that the commonwealth and his own well-being require that he should not go dancing in the weeds of peace, but warned, self-collected and neither defying nor dreading the thunder, let him take both reputation and life in his hand, and with perfect urbanity dare the gibbet and the mob by the absolute truth of his speech and the rectitude of his behavior.

[5] Towards all this external evil the man within the breast assumes a warlike attitude, and affirms his ability to cope single-handed with the infinite army of enemies. To this military attitude of the soul we give the name of Heroism. Its rudest form is the contempt for safety and ease, which makes the attractiveness of war. It is a self-trust which slights the restraints of prudence, in the plenitude of its energy and power to repair the harms it may suffer. The hero is a mind of such balance that no disturbances can shake his will, but pleasantly and as it were merrily he advances to his own music, alike in frightful alarms and in the tipsy mirth of universal dissoluteness. There is somewhat not philosophical in heroism; there is somewhat not holy in it; it seems not to know that other souls are of one texture with it; it has pride; it is the extreme of individual nature. Nevertheless we must profoundly revere it. There is somewhat in great actions which does not allow us to go behind them. Heroism feels and never reasons, and therefore is always right; and although a different breeding, different religion and greater intellectual activity would have modified or even reversed the particular action, yet for the hero that thing he does is the highest deed, and is not open to the

censure of philosophers or divines. It is the avowal of the unschooled man that he finds a quality in him that is negligent of expense, of health, of life, of danger, of hatred, of reproach, and knows that his will is higher and more excellent than all actual and all possible antagonists.

[6] Heroism works in contradiction to the voice of mankind and in contradiction, for a time, to the voice of the great and good. Heroism is an obedience to a secret impulse of an individual's character. Now to no other man can its wisdom appear as it does to him, for every man must be supposed to see a little farther on his own proper path than any one else. Therefore just and wise men take umbrage at his act, until after some little time be past; then they see it to be in unison with their acts. All prudent men see that the action is clean contrary to a sensual prosperity; for every heroic act measures itself by its contempt of some external good. But it finds its own success at last, and then the prudent also extol.

[7] Self-trust is the essence of heroism. It is the state of the soul at war, and its ultimate objects are the last defiance of falsehood and wrong, and the power to bear all that can be inflicted by evil agents. It speaks the truth and it is just, generous, hospitable, temperate, scornful of petty calculations and scornful of being scorned. It persists; it is of an undaunted boldness and of a fortitude not to be wearied out. Its jest is the littleness of common life. That false prudence which dotes on health and wealth is the butt and merriment of heroism. Heroism, like Plotinus, is almost ashamed of its body. What shall it say then to the sugar-plums and cats'-cradles, to the toilet, compliments, quarrels, cards and custard, which rack the wit of all society? What joys has kind nature provided for us dear creatures! There seems to be no interval between greatness and meanness. When the spirit is not master of the world, then it is its dupe. Yet the little man takes the great hoax so innocently, works in it so headlong and believing, is born red, and

dies gray, arranging his toilet, attending on his own health, laying traps for sweet food and strong wine, setting his heart on a horse or a rifle, made happy with a little gossip or a little praise, that the great soul cannot choose but laugh at such earnest nonsense. "Indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with greatness. What a disgrace it is to me to take note how many pairs of silk stockings thou hast, namely, these and those that were the peach-colored ones; or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as one for superfluity, and one other for use!"

[8] Citizens, thinking after the laws of arithmetic, consider the inconvenience of receiving strangers at their fireside, reckon narrowly the loss of time and the unusual display; the soul of a better quality thrusts back the unseasonable economy into the vaults of life, and says, I will obey the God, and the sacrifice and the fire he will provide. Ibn Haukal, the Arabian geographer, describes a heroic extreme in the hospitality of Sogd, in Bukharia. "When I was in Sogd I saw a great building, like a palace, the gates of which were open and fixed back to the wall with large nails. I asked the reason, and was told that the house had not been shut, night or day, for a hundred years. Strangers may present themselves at any hour and in whatever number; the master has amply provided for the reception of the men and their animals and is never happier than when they tarry for some time. Nothing of the kind have I seen in any other country." The magnanimous know very well that they who give time, or money, or shelter, to the stranger,—so it be done for love and not for ostentation,—do, as it were, put God under obligation to them, so perfect are the compensations of the universe. In some way the time they seem to lose is redeemed and the pains they seem to take remunerate themselves. These men fan the flame of human love and raise the standard of civil virtue among mankind. But hospitality must be for service and not for show, or it pulls down the host. The brave soul rates itself too high to value

itself by the splendor of its table and draperies. It gives what it hath, and all it hath, but its own majesty can lend a better grace to bannocks and fair water than belong to city feasts.

[9] The temperance of the hero proceeds from the same wish to do no dishonor to the worthiness he has. But he loves it for its elegancy, not for its austerity. It seems not worth his while to be solemn and denounce with bitterness flesh-eating or wine-drinking, the use of tobacco, or opium, or tea, or silk, or gold. A great man scarcely knows how he dines, how he dresses; but without railing or precision his living is natural and poetic. John Eliot, the Indian Apostle, drank water, and said of wine,—"It is a noble, generous liquor and we should be humbly thankful for it, but, as I remember, water was made before it." Better still is the temperance of King David, who poured out on the ground unto the Lord the water which three of his warriors had brought him to drink, at the peril of their lives.

[10] It is told of Brutus, that when he fell on his sword after the battle of Philippi, he quoted a line of Euripides,—"O Virtue! I have followed thee through life, and I find thee at last but a shade." I doubt not the hero is slandered by this report. The heroic soul does not sell its justice and its nobleness. It does not ask to dine nicely and to sleep warm. The essence of greatness is the perception that virtue is enough. Poverty is its ornament. It does not need plenty, and can very well abide its loss.

[11] But that which takes my fancy most in the heroic class, is the good-humor and hilarity they exhibit. It is a height to which common duty can very well attain, to suffer and to dare with solemnity. But these rare souls set opinion, success, and life at so cheap a rate that they will not soothe their enemies by petitions, or the show of sorrow, but wear their own habitual greatness. Scipio, charged with peculation, refuses to do himself so great a disgrace as to wait for justification, though he had the scroll of his accounts

in his hands, but tears it to pieces before the tribunes. Socrates's condemnation of himself to be maintained in all honor in the Prytaneum, during his life, and Sir Thomas More's playfulness at the scaffold, are of the same strain. In Beaumont and Fletcher's "Sea Voyage," Juletta tells the stout captain and his company,—

> ***Jul.*** Why, slaves, 't is in our power to hang ye.
> ***Master.*** Very likely,
> 'T is in our powers, then, to be hanged, and scorn ye.

These replies are sound and whole. Sport is the bloom and glow of a perfect health. The great will not condescend to take any thing seriously; all must be as gay as the song of a canary, though it were the building of cities or the eradication of old and foolish churches and nations which have cumbered the earth long thousands of years. Simple hearts put all the history and customs of this world behind them, and play their own game in innocent defiance of the Blue-Laws of the world; and such would appear, could we see the human race assembled in vision, like little children frolicking together, though to the eyes of mankind at large they wear a stately and solemn garb of works and influences.

[12] The interest these fine stories have for us, the power of a romance over the boy who grasps the forbidden book under his bench at school, our delight in the hero, is the main fact to our purpose. All these great and transcendent properties are ours. If we dilate in beholding the Greek energy, the Roman pride, it is that we are already domesticating the same sentiment. Let us find room for this great guest in our small houses. The first step of worthiness will be to disabuse us of our superstitious associations with places and times, with number and size. Why should these words, Athenian, Roman, Asia and England, so tingle in the ear? Where the heart is, there the muses, there the gods sojourn, and not in any geography of fame. Massachusetts, Connecticut River and Boston Bay you think paltry places, and the ear loves names of foreign and classic topography. But

here we are; and, if we will tarry a little, we may come to learn that here is best. See to it only that thyself is here, and art and nature, hope and fate, friends, angels and the Supreme Being shall not be absent from the chamber where thou sittest. Epaminondas, brave and affectionate, does not seem to us to need Olympus to die upon, nor the Syrian sunshine. He lies very well where he is. The Jerseys were handsome ground enough for Washington to tread, and London streets for the feet of Milton. A great man makes his climate genial in the imagination of men, and its air the beloved element of all delicate spirits. That country is the fairest which is inhabited by the noblest minds. The pictures which fill the imagination in reading the actions of Pericles, Xenophon, Columbus, Bayard, Sidney, Hampden, teach us how needlessly mean our life is; that we, by the depth of our living, should deck it with more than regal or national splendor, and act on principles that should interest man and nature in the length of our days.

[13] We have seen or heard of many extraordinary young men who never ripened, or whose performance in actual life was not extraordinary. When we see their air and mien, when we hear them speak of society, of books, of religion, we admire their superiority; they seem to throw contempt on our entire polity and social state; theirs is the tone of a youthful giant who is sent to work revolutions. But they enter an active profession and the forming Colossus shrinks to the common size of man. The magic they used was the ideal tendencies, which always make the Actual ridiculous; but the tough world had its revenge the moment they put their horses of the sun to plough in its furrow. They found no example and no companion, and their heart fainted. What then? The lesson they gave in their first aspirations is yet true; and a better valor and a purer truth shall one day organize their belief. Or why should a woman liken herself to any historical woman, and think, because Sappho, or Sévigné, or De Staël, or the cloistered souls who have had

genius and cultivation do not satisfy the imagination and the serene Themis, none can,—certainly not she? Why not? She has a new and unattempted problem to solve, perchance that of the happiest nature that ever bloomed. Let the maiden, with erect soul, walk serenely on her way, accept the hint of each new experience, search in turn all the objects that solicit her eye, that she may learn the power and the charm of her new-born being, which is the kindling of a new dawn in the recesses of space. The fair girl who repels interference by a decided and proud choice of influences, so careless of pleasing, so wilful and lofty, inspires every beholder with somewhat of her own nobleness. The silent heart encourages her; O friend, never strike sail to a fear! Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas. Not in vain you live, for every passing eye is cheered and refined by the vision.

[14] The characteristic of heroism is its persistency. All men have wandering impulses, fits and starts of generosity. But when you have chosen your part, abide by it, and do not weakly try to reconcile yourself with the world. The heroic cannot be the common, nor the common the heroic. Yet we have the weakness to expect the sympathy of people in those actions whose excellence is that they outrun sympathy and appeal to a tardy justice. If you would serve your brother, because it is fit for you to serve him, do not take back your words when you find that prudent people do not commend you. Adhere to your own act, and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant and broken the monotony of a decorous age. It was a high counsel that I once heard given to a young person,—"Always do what you are afraid to do." A simple manly character need never make an apology, but should regard its past action with the calmness of Phocion, when he admitted that the event of the battle was happy, yet did not regret his dissuasion from the battle.

[15] There is no weakness or exposure for which we cannot find consolation in the thought—this is a part of my constitution, part of my relation and office to my fellow-creature. Has nature covenanted with me that I should never appear to disadvantage, never make a ridiculous figure? Let us be generous of our dignity as well as of our money. Greatness once and for ever has done with opinion. We tell our charities, not because we wish to be praised for them, not because we think they have great merit, but for our justification. It is a capital blunder; as you discover when another man recites his charities.

[16] To speak the truth, even with some austerity, to live with some rigor of temperance, or some extremes of generosity, seems to be an asceticism which common good-nature would appoint to those who are at ease and in plenty, in sign that they feel a brotherhood with the great multitude of suffering men. And not only need we breathe and exercise the soul by assuming the penalties of abstinence, of debt, of solitude, of unpopularity,—but it behooves the wise man to look with a bold eye into those rarer dangers which sometimes invade men, and to familiarize himself with disgusting forms of disease, with sounds of execration, and the vision of violent death.

[17] Times of heroism are generally times of terror, but the day never shines in which this element may not work. The circumstances of man, we say, are historically somewhat better in this country and at this hour than perhaps ever before. More freedom exists for culture. It will not now run against an axe at the first step out of the beaten track of opinion. But whoso is heroic will always find crises to try his edge. Human virtue demands her champions and martyrs, and the trial of persecution always proceeds. It is but the other day that the brave Lovejoy gave his breast to the bullets of a mob, for the rights of free speech and opinion, and died when it was better not to live.

[18] I see not any road of perfect peace which a man can walk, but after the counsel of his own bosom. Let him quit too much association, let him go home much, and stablish himself in those courses he approves. The unremitting retention of simple and high sentiments in obscure duties is hardening the character to that temper which will work with honor, if need be in the tumult, or on the scaffold. Whatever outrages have happened to men may befall a man again; and very easily in a republic, if there appear any signs of a decay of religion. Coarse slander, fire, tar and feathers and the gibbet, the youth may freely bring home to his mind and with what sweetness of temper he can, and inquire how fast he can fix his sense of duty, braving such penalties, whenever it may please the next newspaper and a sufficient number of his neighbors to pronounce his opinions incendiary.

[19] It may calm the apprehension of calamity in the most susceptible heart to see how quick a bound Nature has set to the utmost infliction of malice. We rapidly approach a brink over which no enemy can follow us:—

"Let them rave:
Thou art quiet in thy grave."

In the gloom of our ignorance of what shall be, in the hour when we are deaf to the higher voices, who does not envy those who have seen safely to an end their manful endeavor? Who that sees the meanness of our politics but inly congratulates Washington that he is long already wrapped in his shroud, and for ever safe; that he was laid sweet in his grave, the hope of humanity not yet subjugated in him? Who does not sometimes envy the good and brave who are no more to suffer from the tumults of the natural world, and await with curious complacency the speedy term of his own conversation with finite nature? And yet the love that will be annihilated sooner than treacherous has already made death impossible, and affirms itself no mortal but a native of the deeps of absolute and inextinguishable being.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

COMPENSATION

The wings of Time are black and white,
Pied with morning and with night.
Mountain tall and ocean deep
Trembling balance duly keep.
In changing moon, in tidal wave,
Glows the feud of Want and Have.
Gauge of more and less through space
Electric star and pencil plays.
The lonely Earth amid the balls
That hurry through the eternal halls,
A makeweight flying to the void,
Supplemental asteroid,
Or compensatory spark,
Shoots across the neutral Dark.

Man's the elm, and Wealth the vine,
Stanch and strong the tendrils twine:
Though the frail ringlets thee deceive,
None from its stock that vine can reave.
Fear not, then, thou child infirm,
There's no god dare wrong a worm.
Laurel crowns cleave to deserts
And power to him who power exerts;
Hast not thy share? On winged feet,
Lo! it rushes thee to meet;
And all that Nature made thy own,
Floating in air or pent in stone,
Will rive the hills and swim the sea
And, like thy shadow, follow thee.

[1] Ever since I was a boy I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation; for it seemed to me when very young that on this subject life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. The documents too from which the doctrine is to be drawn, charmed my fancy by their endless variety, and lay always before me, even in sleep; for they are the tools in our hands, the bread in our basket, the transactions of the street, the farm and the dwelling-house; greetings, relations, debts and credits, the influence of character, the nature and endowment of all men. It seemed to me also that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition; and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation

of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared moreover that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and crooked passages in our journey, that would not suffer us to lose our way.

[2] I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful; that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offence appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe when the meeting broke up they separated without remark on the sermon.

[3] Yet what was the import of this teaching? What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratifications another day,—bank-stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was,—'We are to have *such* a good time as the sinners have now';—or, to push it to its extreme import,—'You sin now, we shall sin by and by; we would sin now, if we could; not being successful we expect our revenge to-morrow.'

[4] The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful; that justice is not done now. The

blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth; announcing the presence of the soul; the omnipotence of the will; and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood.

[5] I find a similar base tone in the popular religious works of the day and the same doctrines assumed by the literary men when occasionally they treat the related topics. I think that our popular theology has gained in decorum, and not in principle, over the superstitions it has displaced. But men are better than their theology. Their daily life gives it the lie. Every ingenuous and aspiring soul leaves the doctrine behind him in his own experience, and all men feel sometimes the falsehood which they cannot demonstrate. For men are wiser than they know. That which they hear in schools and pulpits without afterthought, if said in conversation would probably be questioned in silence. If a man dogmatize in a mixed company on Providence and the divine laws, he is answered by a silence which conveys well enough to an observer the dissatisfaction of the hearer, but his incapacity to make his own statement.

[6] I shall attempt in this and the following chapter to record some facts that indicate the path of the law of Compensation; happy beyond my expectation if I shall truly draw the smallest arc of this circle.

[7] Polarity, or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and light; in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female; in the inspiration and expiration of plants and animals; in the equation of quantity and quality in the fluids of the animal body; in the systole and diastole of the heart; in the undulations of fluids and of sound; in the centrifugal and centripetal gravity; in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinity. Superinduce magnetism at one end of a needle,

the opposite magnetism takes place at the other end. If the south attracts, the north repels. To empty here, you must condense there. An inevitable dualism bisects nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole; as, spirit, matter; man, woman; odd, even; subjective, objective; in, out; upper, under; motion, rest; yea, nay.

[8] Whilst the world is thus dual, so is every one of its parts. The entire system of things gets represented in every particle. There is somewhat that resembles the ebb and flow of the sea, day and night, man and woman, in a single needle of the pine, in a kernel of corn, in each individual of every animal tribe. The reaction, so grand in the elements, is repeated within these small boundaries. For example, in the animal kingdom the physiologist has observed that no creatures are favorites, but a certain compensation balances every gift and every defect. A surplusage given to one part is paid out of a reduction from another part of the same creature. If the head and neck are enlarged, the trunk and extremities are cut short.

[9] The theory of the mechanic forces is another example. What we gain in power is lost in time, and the converse. The periodic or compensating errors of the planets is another instance. The influences of climate and soil in political history is another. The cold climate invigorates. The barren soil does not breed fevers, crocodiles, tigers or scorpions.

[10] The same dualism underlies the nature and condition of man. Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For every thing you have missed, you have gained something else; and for every thing you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased that use them. If the

gatherer gathers too much, Nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions. The waves of the sea do not more speedily seek a level from their loftiest tossing than the varieties of condition tend to equalize themselves. There is always some levelling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate, substantially on the same ground with all others. Is a man too strong and fierce for society and by temper and position a bad citizen,—a morose ruffian, with a dash of the pirate in him?—Nature sends him a troop of pretty sons and daughters who are getting along in the dame's classes at the village school, and love and fear for them smooths his grim scowl to courtesy. Thus she contrives to intenerate the granite and felspar, takes the boar out and puts the lamb in and keeps her balance true.

[11] The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne. Or do men desire the more substantial and permanent grandeur of genius? Neither has this an immunity. He who by force of will or of thought is great and overlooks thousands, has the charges of that eminence. With every influx of light comes new danger. Has he light? he must bear witness to the light, and always outrun that sympathy which gives him such keen satisfaction, by his fidelity to new revelations of the incessant soul. He must hate father and mother, wife and child. Has he all that the world loves and admires and covets?—he must cast behind him their admiration, and afflict them by faithfulness to his truth, and become a byword and a hissing.

[12] This law writes the laws of cities and nations. It is in vain to build or plot or combine against it. Things

refuse to be mismanaged long. *Res nolunt diu male administrari.* Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear. If the government is cruel, the governor's life is not safe. If you tax too high, the revenue will yield nothing. If you make the criminal code sanguinary, juries will not convict. If the law is too mild, private vengeance comes in. If the government is a terrific democracy, the pressure is resisted by an over-charge of energy in the citizen, and life glows with a fiercer flame. The true life and satisfactions of man seem to elude the utmost rigors or felicities of condition and to establish themselves with great indifferency under all varieties of circumstances. Under all governments the influence of character remains the same,—in Turkey and in New England about alike. Under the primeval despots of Egypt, history honestly confesses that man must have been as free as culture could make him.

[13] These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man. Each new form repeats not only the main character of the type, but part for part all the details, all the aims, furtherances, hindrances, energies and whole system of every other. Every occupation, trade, art, transaction, is a compend of the world and a correlative of every other. Each one is an entire emblem of human life; of its good and ill, its trials, its enemies, its course and its end. And each one must somehow accommodate the whole man and recite all his destiny.

[14] The world globes itself in a drop of dew. The microscope cannot find the animalcule which is less perfect for being little. Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on

eternity,—all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act. The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb. The value of the universe contrives to throw itself into every point. If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so the repulsion; if the force, so the limitation.

[15] Thus is the universe alive. All things are moral. That soul which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspiration; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. "It is in the world, and the world was made by it." Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. *Οἱ κύβοι Διὸς ἀεὶ εὐπίπτουσι*,—The dice of God are always loaded. The world looks like a multiplication-table, or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Take what figure you will, its exact value, nor more nor less, still returns to you. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind.

[16] Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates itself, in a twofold manner; first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The causal retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offence, but they follow because they accompany it. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure

which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preëxists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

[17] Whilst thus the world will be whole and refuses to be disparted, we seek to act partially, to sunder, to appropriate; for example,—to gratify the senses we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character. The ingenuity of man has always been dedicated to the solution of one problem,—how to detach the sensual sweet, the sensual strong, the sensual bright, etc., from the moral sweet, the moral deep, the moral fair; that is, again, to contrive to cut clean off this upper surface so thin as to leave it bottomless; to get a *one end*, without an *other end*. The soul says, 'Eat'; the body would feast. The soul says, 'The man and woman shall be one flesh and one soul'; the body would join the flesh only. The soul says, 'Have dominion over all things to the ends of virtue'; the body would have the power over things to its own ends.

[18] The soul strives amain to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it,—power, pleasure, knowledge, beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody; to set up for himself; to truck and higgle for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that he may ride; to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern, that he may be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power, and fame. They think that to be great is to possess one side of nature,—the sweet, without the other side, the bitter.

[19] This dividing and detaching is steadily counteracted. Up to this day it must be owned no projector has had the smallest success. The parted water reunites behind our hand. Pleasure is taken out of pleasant things, profit out of profitable things, power out of strong things, as soon as we seek to separate them from the whole. We can no more halve things and get the sensual good, by itself,

than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or a light without a shadow. "Drive out Nature with a fork, she comes running back."

[20] Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know, that they do not touch him;—but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part they attack him in another more vital part. If he has escaped them in form and in the appearance, it is because he has resisted his life and fled from himself, and the retribution is so much death. So signal is the failure of all attempts to make this separation of the good from the tax, that the experiment would not be tried,—since to try it is to be mad,—but for the circumstance that when the disease began in the will, of rebellion and separation, the intellect is at once infected, so that the man ceases to see God whole in each object, but is able to see the sensual allurement of an object and not see the sensual hurt; he sees the mermaid's head but not the dragon's tail, and thinks he can cut off that which he would have from that which he would not have. "How secret art thou who dwellest in the highest heavens in silence, O thou only great God, sprinkling with an unwearied providence certain penal blindnesses upon such as have unbridled desires!"

[21] The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of proverbs, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. Thus the Greeks called Jupiter, Supreme Mind; but having traditionally ascribed to him many base actions, they involuntarily made amends to reason by tying up the hands of so bad a god. He is made as helpless as a king of England. Prometheus knows one secret which Jove must bargain for; Minerva, another. He cannot get his own thunders; Minerva keeps the key of them:—

"Of all the gods, I only know the keys
That ope the solid doors within whose vaults
His thunders sleep."

A plain confession of the in-working of the All and of its moral aim. The Indian mythology ends in the same ethics; and it would seem impossible for any fable to be invented and get any currency which was not moral. Aurora forgot to ask youth for her lover, and though Tithonus is immortal, he is old. Achilles is not quite invulnerable; the sacred waters did not wash the heel by which Thetis held him. Siegfried, in the Nibelungen, is not quite immortal, for a leaf fell on his back whilst he was bathing in the dragon's blood, and that spot which it covered is mortal. And so it must be. There is a crack in every thing God has made. It would seem there is always this vindictive circumstance stealing in at unawares even into the wild poesy in which the human fancy attempted to make bold holiday and to shake itself free of the old laws,—this back-stroke, this kick of the gun, certifying that the law is fatal; that in nature nothing can be given, all things are sold.

[22] This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis, who keeps watch in the universe and lets no offence go unchastised. The Furies they said are attendants on justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls and iron swords and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded that when the Thasians erected a statue to Theagenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night and endeavored to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

[23] This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer which has nothing private in it; that which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution and not from his too active invention; that which

in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic world that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrass when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakespeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

[24] Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of reason, or the statements of an absolute truth without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws, which the pulpit, the senate and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and workshops by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

[25] All things are double, one against another.—Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love.—Give, and it shall be given you.—He that watereth shall be watered himself. —What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it.—Nothing venture, nothing have.—Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less.—Who doth not work shall not eat.—Harm watch, harm catch.—Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them.—If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own.—Bad counsel confounds the adviser.—The Devil is an ass.

[26] It is thus written, because it is thus in life. Our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from

the public good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world.

[27] A man cannot speak but he judges himself. With his will or against his will he draws his portrait to the eye of his companions by every word. Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. Or rather it is a harpoon hurled at the whale, unwinding, as it flies, a coil of cord in the boat, and, if the harpoon is not good, or not well thrown, it will go nigh to cut the steersman in twain or to sink the boat.

[28] You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong. "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him," said Burke. The exclusive in fashionable life does not see that he excludes himself from enjoyment, in the attempt to appropriate it. The exclusionist in religion does not see that he shuts the door of heaven on himself, in striving to shut out others. Treat men as pawns and ninepins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart, you shall lose your own. The senses would make things of all persons; of women, of children, of the poor. The vulgar proverb, "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," is sound philosophy.

[29] All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are punished by fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow-man, I have no displeasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is not good for him, my neighbor feels the wrong; he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him; his eyes no longer seek mine; there is war between us; there is hate in him and fear in me.

[30] All the old abuses in society, universal and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are

avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity and the herald of all revolutions. One thing he teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and property. That obscene bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

[31] Of the like nature is that expectation of change which instantly follows the suspension of our voluntary activity. The terror of cloudless noon, the emerald of Polycrates, the awe of prosperity, the instinct which leads every generous soul to impose on itself tasks of a noble asceticism and vicarious virtue, are the tremblings of the balance of justice through the heart and mind of man.

[32] Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbor's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbor; and every new transaction alters according to its nature their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbor's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

[33] A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is the part of prudence to face every claimant and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand

for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base,—and that is the one base thing in the universe,—to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

[34] Labor is watched over by the same pitiless laws. Cheapest, say the prudent, is the dearest labor. What we buy in a broom, a mat, a wagon, a knife, is some application of good sense to a common want. It is best to pay in your land a skilful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening; in your sailor, good sense applied to navigation; in the house, good sense applied to cooking, sewing, serving; in your agent, good sense applied to accounts and affairs. So do you multiply your presence, or spread yourself throughout your estate. But because of the dual constitution of things, in labor as in life there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labor is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. These signs, like paper money, may be counterfeited or stolen, but that which they represent, namely, knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen. These ends of labor cannot be answered but by real exertions of the mind, and in obedience to pure motives. The cheat, the defaulter, the gambler, cannot extort the knowledge of material and moral nature which his honest care and pains yield to the operative. The law of nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power; but they who do not the thing have not the power.

[35] Human labor, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that every thing has its price,—and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get anything without its price,—is not less sublime in the columns of a leger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of light and darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature. I cannot doubt that the high laws which each man sees implicated in those processes with which he is conversant, the stern ethics which sparkle on his chisel-edge, which are measured out by his plumb and foot-rule, which stand as manifest in the footing of the shop-bill as in the history of a state—do recommend to him his trade, and though seldom named, exalt his business to his imagination.

[36] The league between virtue and nature engages all things to assume a hostile front to vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit, but there is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Some damning circumstance always transpires. The laws and substances of nature,—water, snow, wind, gravitation,—become penalties to the thief.

[37] On the other hand the law holds with equal sureness for all right action. Love, and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of an algebraic equation. The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns every thing to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm; but as the royal armies sent against

Napoleon, when he approached cast down their colors and from enemies became friends, so disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offence, poverty, prove benefactors:—

> "Winds blow and waters roll
> Strength to the brave and power and deity,
> Yet in themselves are nothing."

[38] The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men until he has suffered from the one and seen the triumph of the other over his own want of the same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.

[39] Our strength grows out of our weakness. The indignation which arms itself with secret forces does not awaken until we are pricked and stung and sorely assailed. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill. The wise man throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes and falls off from him like a dead skin and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended

in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of the enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

[40] The same guards which protect us from disaster, defect and enmity, defend us, if we will, from selfishness and fraud. Bolts and bars are not the best of our institutions, nor is shrewdness in trade a mark of wisdom. Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfilment of every contract, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.

[41] The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason and traversing its work. The mob is man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns

their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities, as to individuals, when the truth is seen and the martyrs are justified.

[42] Thus do all things preach the indifferency of circumstances. The man is all. Every thing has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content. But the doctrine of compensation is not the doctrine of indifferency. The thoughtless say, on hearing these representations,—What boots it to do well? there is one event to good and evil; if I gain any good I must pay for it; if I lose any good I gain some other; all actions are indifferent.

[43] There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but a life. The soul *is.* Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real Being. Essence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole. Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts, and times within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade on which as a background the living universe paints itself forth, but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

[44] We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted

the law? Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him he so far deceases from nature. In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also; but, should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account.

[45] Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue; no penalty to wisdom; they are proper additions of being. In a virtuous action I properly *am;* in a virtuous act I add to the world; I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense. The soul refuses limits, and always affirms an Optimism, never a Pessimism.

[46] His life is a progress, and not a station. His instinct is trust. Our instinct uses "more" and "less" in application to man, of the *presence of the soul*, and not of its absence; the brave man is greater than the coward; the true, the benevolent, the wise, is more a man and not less, than the fool and knave. There is no tax on the good of virtue, for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative. Material good has its tax, and if it came without desert or sweat, has no root in me, and the next wind will blow it away. But all the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is, by labor which the heart and the head allow. I no longer wish to meet a good I do not earn, for example to find a pot of buried gold, knowing that it brings with it new burdens. I do not wish more external goods,—neither possessions, nor honors, nor powers, nor persons. The gain is apparent; the tax is certain. But there is no tax on the knowledge that the compensation exists and that it is not desirable to dig up treasure. Herein I rejoice with a serene eternal peace. I contract the boundaries of possible mischief. I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard,—

"Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

[47] In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the inequalities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of More and Less. How can Less not feel the pain; how not feel indignation or malevolence towards More? Look at those who have less faculty, and one feels sad and knows not well what to make of it. He almost shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother and my brother is me. If I feel overshadowed and outdone by great neighbors, I can yet love; I can still receive; and he that loveth maketh his own the grandeur he loves. Thereby I make the discovery that my brother is my guardian, acting for me with the friendliest designs, and the estate I so admired and envied is my own. It is the nature of the soul to appropriate all things. Jesus and Shakespeare are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate them in my own conscious domain. His virtue,—is not that mine? His wit,—if it cannot be made mine, it is not wit.

[48] Such also is the natural history of calamity. The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends and home and laws and faith, as the shell-fish crawls out of its beautiful but stony case, because it no longer admits of its growth, and slowly forms a new house. In proportion to the vigor of the individual these revolutions are frequent, until in some happier mind they are incessant and all worldly relations hang very

loosely about him, becoming as it were a transparent fluid membrane through which the living form is seen, and not, as in most men, an indurated heterogeneous fabric of many dates and of no settled character, in which the man is imprisoned. Then there can be enlargement, and the man of to-day scarcely recognizes the man of yesterday. And such should be the outward biography of man in time, a putting off of dead circumstances day by day, as he renews his raiment day by day. But to us, in our lapsed estate, resting, not advancing, resisting, not coöperating with the divine expansion, this growth comes by shocks.

[49] We cannot part with our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out that archangels may come in. We are idolaters of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in to-day to rival or recreate that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, 'Up and onward for evermore!' We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the new; and so we walk ever with reverted eyes, like those monsters who look backwards.

[50] And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a

household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden-flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

CONCORD HYMN

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE MONUMENT, APRIL 19, 1836

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

THE RHODORA:

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

THE HUMBLE-BEE

Burly, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!

Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,

Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste;
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

DAYS

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)

THE AMBITIOUS GUEST

One September night a family had gathered round their hearth and piled it high with the driftwood of mountain streams, the dry cones of the pine, and the splintered ruins of great trees that had come crashing down the precipice. Up the chimney roared the fire, and brightened the room with its broad blaze. The faces of the father and mother had a sober gladness; the children laughed. The eldest daughter was the image of Happiness at seventeen, and the aged grandmother, who sat knitting in the warmest place, was the image of Happiness grown old. They had found the "herb heart's-ease" in the bleakest spot of all New England. This family were situated in the Notch of the White Hills, where the wind was sharp throughout the year, and pitilessly cold in the winter, giving their cottage all its fresh inclemency before it descended on the valley of the Saco. They dwelt in a cold spot and a dangerous one, for a mountain towered above their heads so steep that the stones would often rumble down its sides and startle them at midnight.

The daughter had just uttered some simple jest that filled them all with mirth, when the wind came through the Notch and seemed to pause before their cottage, rattling the door with a sound of wailing and lamentation before it passed into the valley. For a moment it saddened them, though there was nothing unusual in the tones. But the family were glad again when they perceived that the latch was lifted by some traveller whose footsteps had been unheard amid the dreary blast which heralded his approach, and wailed as he was entering and went moaning away from the door.

Though they dwelt in such a solitude, these people held daily converse with the world. The romantic pass of the

Notch is a great artery through which the life-blood of internal commerce is continually throbbing between Maine on one side and the Green Mountains and the shores of the St. Lawrence on the other. The stage-coach always drew up before the door of the cottage. The wayfarer with no companion but his staff paused here to exchange a word, that the sense of loneliness might not utterly overcome him ere he could pass through the cleft of the mountain or reach the first house in the valley. And here the teamster on his way to Portland market would put up for the night and, if a bachelor, might sit an hour beyond the usual bedtime, and steal a kiss from the mountain maid at parting. It was one of those primitive taverns where the traveller pays only for food and lodging, but meets with a homely kindness beyond all price. When the footsteps were heard, therefore, between the outer door and the inner one, the whole family rose up, grandmother, children and all, as if about to welcome some one who belonged to them, and whose fate was linked with theirs.

The door was opened by a young man. His face at first wore the melancholy expression, almost despondency, of one who travels a wild and bleak road at nightfall and alone, but soon brightened up when he saw the kindly warmth of his reception. He felt his heart spring forward to meet them all, from the old woman who wiped a chair with her apron to the little child that held out its arms to him. One glance and smile placed the stranger on a footing of innocent familiarity with the eldest daughter.

"Ah! this fire is the right thing," cried he, "especially when there is such a pleasant circle round it. I am quite benumbed, for the Notch is just like the pipe of a great pair of bellows; it has blown a terrible blast in my face all the way from Bartlett."

"Then you are going towards Vermont?" said the master of the house as he helped to take a light knapsack off the young man's shoulders.

"Yes, to Burlington, and far enough beyond," replied he. "I meant to have been at Ethan Crawford's to-night, but a pedestrian lingers along such a road as this. It is no matter; for, when I saw this good fire and all your cheerful faces, I felt as if you had kindled it on purpose for me and were waiting my arrival. So I shall sit down among you and make myself at home."

The frank-hearted stranger had just drawn his chair to the fire when something like a heavy footstep was heard without, rushing down the steep side of the mountain as with long and rapid strides, and taking such a leap in passing the cottage as to strike the opposite precipice. The family held their breath, because they knew the sound, and their guest held his by instinct.

"The old mountain has thrown a stone at us for fear we should forget him," said the landlord, recovering himself. "He sometimes nods his head and threatens to come down, but we are old neighbors, and agree together pretty well upon the whole. Besides, we have a sure place of refuge hard by if he should be coming in good earnest."

Let us now suppose the stranger to have finished his supper of bear's meat, and by his natural felicity of manner, to have placed himself on a footing of kindness with the whole family; so that they talked as freely together as if he belonged to their mountain brood. He was of a proud, yet gentle spirit, haughty and reserved among the rich and great, but ever ready to stoop his head to the lowly cottage door, and be like a brother or a son at the poor man's fireside. In the household of the Notch he found warmth and simplicity of feeling, the pervading intelligence of New England, and a poetry of native growth which they had gathered when they little thought of it from the mountain peaks and chasms, and at the very threshold of their romantic and dangerous abode. He had travelled far and alone; his whole life, indeed, had been a solitary path, for, with the lofty caution of his nature, he had kept himself apart from those who might otherwise have been his companions. The family, too, though so kind and hospitable, had that consciousness of unity among themselves and separation from the world at large which, in every domestic circle, should still keep a holy place where no stranger may intrude. But this evening a prophetic sympathy impelled the refined and educated youth to pour out his heart before the simple mountaineers, and constrained them to answer him with the same free confidence. And thus it should have been. Is not the kindred of a common fate a closer tie than that of birth?

The secret of the young man's character was a high and abstracted ambition. He could have borne to live an undistinguished life, but not to be forgotten in the grave. Yearning desire had been transformed to hope, and hope, long cherished, had become like certainty that, obscurely as he journeyed now, a glory was to beam on all his pathway, though not, perhaps, while he was treading it. But when posterity should gaze back into the gloom of what was now the present, they would trace the brightness of his footsteps, brightening as meaner glories faded, and confess that a gifted one had passed from his cradle to his tomb with none to recognize him.

"As yet," cried the stranger, his cheek glowing and his eye flashing with enthusiasm—"as yet I have done nothing. Were I to vanish from the earth to-morrow, none would know so much of me as you—that a nameless youth came up at nightfall from the valley of the Saco, and opened his heart to you in the evening, and passed through the Notch by sunrise, and was seen no more. Not a soul would ask, 'Who was he? Whither did the wanderer go?' But I cannot die till I have achieved my destiny. Then let Death come: I shall have built my monument."

There was a continual flow of natural emotion gushing forth amid abstracted reverie which enabled the family to understand this young man's sentiments, though so foreign from their own. With quick sensibility of the ludicrous, he blushed at the ardor into which he had been betrayed.

"You laugh at me," said he, taking the eldest daughter's hand and laughing himself. "You think my ambition as nonsensical as if I were to freeze myself to death on the top of Mount Washington only that people might spy at me from the country roundabout. And truly that would be a noble pedestal for a man's statue."

"It is better to sit here by this fire," answered the girl, blushing, "and be comfortable and contented, though nobody thinks about us."

"I suppose," said her father, after a fit of musing, "there is something natural in what the young man says; and if my mind had been turned that way, I might have felt just the same. It is strange, wife, how his talk has set my head running on things that are pretty certain never to come to pass."

"Perhaps they may," observed the wife. "Is the man thinking what he will do when he is a widower?"

"No, no!" cried he, repelling the idea with reproachful kindness. "When I think of your death, Esther, I think of mine too. But I was wishing we had a good farm in Bartlett or Bethlehem or Littleton or some other township round the White Mountains, but not where they could tumble on our heads. I should want to stand well with my neighbors and be called squire and sent to General Court for a term or two; for a plain, honest man may do as much good there as a lawyer. And when I should be grown quite an old man, and you an old woman, so as not to be long apart, I might die happy enough in my bed, and leave you all crying around me. A slate gravestone would suit me as well as a marble one, with just my name and age, and a verse of a hymn, and something to let people know that I lived an honest man and died a Christian."

"There, now!" exclaimed the stranger; "it is our nature to desire a monument, be it slate or marble, or a pillar of granite, or a glorious memory in the universal heart of man."

"We're in a strange way to-night," said the wife, with tears in her eyes. "They say it's a sign of something when folks' minds go a-wandering so. Hark to the children!"

They listened accordingly. The younger children had been put to bed in another room, but with an open door between; so that they could be heard talking busily among themselves. One and all seemed to have caught the infection from the fireside circle, and were outvying each other in wild wishes and childish projects of what they would do when they came to be men and women. At length a little boy, instead of addressing his brothers and sisters, called out to his mother.

"I'll tell you what I wish, mother," cried he: "I want you and father and grandma'm, and all of us, and the stranger too, to start right away and go and take a drink out of the basin of the Flume."

Nobody could help laughing at the child's notion of leaving a warm bed and dragging them from a cheerful fire, to visit the basin of the Flume—a brook, which tumbles over the precipice, deep within the Notch.

The boy had hardly spoken, when a wagon rattled along the road, and stopped a moment before the door. It appeared to contain two or three men who were cheering their hearts with the rough chorus of a song which resounded in broken notes between the cliffs, while the singers hesitated whether to continue their journey or put up here for the night.

"Father," said the girl, "they are calling you by name."

But the good man doubted whether they had really called him, and was unwilling to show himself too solicitous of gain by inviting people to patronize his house. He therefore did not hurry to the door, and the lash being soon applied, the travellers plunged into the Notch, still singing and laughing, though their music and mirth came back drearily from the heart of the mountain.

"There, mother!" cried the boy, again; "they'd have given us a ride to the Flume."

Again they laughed at the child's pertinacious fancy for a night-ramble. But it happened that a light cloud passed over the daughter's spirit; she looked gravely into the fire and drew a breath that was almost a sigh. It forced its way, in spite of a little struggle to repress it. Then, starting and blushing, she looked quickly round the circle, as if they had caught a glimpse into her bosom. The stranger asked what she had been thinking of.

"Nothing," answered she, with a downcast smile; "only I felt lonesome just then."

"Oh, I have always had a gift of feeling what is in other people's hearts," said he, half seriously. "Shall I tell the secrets of yours? For I know what to think when a young girl shivers by a warm hearth and complains of lonesomeness at her mother's side. Shall I put these feelings into words?"

"They would not be a girl's feelings any longer if they could be put into words," replied the mountain nymph, laughing, but avoiding his eye.

All this was said apart. Perhaps a germ of love was springing in their hearts so pure that it might blossom in Paradise, since it could not be matured on earth; for women worship such gentle dignity as his, and the proud, contemplative, yet kindly, soul is oftenest captivated by simplicity like hers. But while they spoke softly, and he was watching the happy sadness, the lightsome shadows, the shy yearnings, of a maiden's nature, the wind through the Notch took a deeper and drearier sound. It seemed, as the fanciful stranger said, like the choral strain of the spirits of the blast who in old Indian times had their dwelling among these mountains and made their heights and recesses a sacred region. There was a wail along the road, as if a funeral were passing. To chase away the gloom, the family threw pine-branches on their fire till the dry leaves crackled and the flame arose, discovering once again a scene of peace and humble happiness. The light hovered about them fondly and caressed them all. There were the little faces of the children peeping from their bed apart, and here the father's frame of strength, the mother's subdued and careful mien, the high-browed youth, the budding girl, and the good old grandam, still knitting in the warmest place.

The aged woman looked up from her task, and with fingers ever busy was the next to speak.

"Old folks have their notions," said she, "as well as young ones. You've been wishing and planning and letting your heads run on one thing and another till you've set my mind a-wandering too. Now, what should an old woman wish for, when she can go but a step or two before she comes to her grave? Children, it will haunt me night and day till I tell you."

"What is it, mother?" cried the husband and wife at once.

Then the old woman, with an air of mystery which drew the circle closer round the fire, informed them that she had provided her grave-clothes some years before—a nice linen shroud, a cap with a muslin ruff, and everything of a finer sort than she had worn since her wedding-day. But this evening an old superstition had strangely recurred to her. It used to be said in her younger days that if anything were amiss with a corpse—if only the ruff were not smooth or the cap did not set right—the corpse in the coffin and beneath the clods, would strive to put up its cold hands and arrange it. The bare thought made her nervous.

"Don't talk so, grandmother!" said the girl, shuddering.

"Now," continued the old woman, with singular earnestness, yet smiling strangely at her own folly, "I want one of you, my children, when your mother is dressed and in the coffin,—I want one of you to hold a looking-glass over my face. Who knows but I may take a glimpse at myself and see whether all's right?"

"Old and young, we dream of graves and monuments," murmured the stranger-youth. "I wonder how mariners feel when the ship is sinking and they, unknown and undistinguished, are to be buried together in the ocean, that wide and nameless sepulchre?"

For a moment the old woman's ghastly conception so engrossed the minds of her hearers that a sound abroad in the night, rising like the roar of a blast, had grown broad, deep, and terrible before the fated group were conscious of it. The house and all within it trembled; the foundations of the earth seemed to be shaken, as if this awful sound were the peal of the last trump. Young and old exchanged one wild glance and remained an instant pale, affrighted, without utterance or power to move. Then the same shriek burst simultaneously from all their lips:

"The slide! The slide!"

The simplest words must intimate, but not portray, the unutterable horror of the catastrophe. The victims rushed from their cottage and sought refuge in what they deemed a safer spot, where, in contemplation of such an emergency, a sort of barrier had been reared. Alas! they had quitted their security and fled right into the pathway of destruction. Down came the whole side of the mountain in a cataract of ruin. Just before it reached the house the stream broke into two branches, shivered not a window there, but overwhelmed the whole vicinity, blocked up the road, and annihilated everything in its dreadful course. Long ere the thunder of that great slide had ceased to roar among the mountains the mortal agony had been endured, and the victims were at peace. Their bodies were never found.

The next morning the light smoke was seen stealing from the cottage chimney up the mountain-side. Within, the fire was yet smouldering on the hearth, and the chairs in a circle round it, as if the inhabitants had but gone forth to view the devastation of the slide and would shortly return, to thank Heaven for their miraculous escape. All had left separate tokens by which those who had known the family were made to shed a tear for each. Who has not heard their name? The story has been told far and wide, and will forever be a legend of these mountains. Poets have sung their fate.

There were circumstances which led some to suppose that a stranger had been received into the cottage on this awful night, and had shared the catastrophe of all its inmates; others denied that there were sufficient grounds for such a conjecture. Woe for the high-souled youth with his dream of earthly immortality! His name and person utterly unknown, his history, his way of life, his plans, a mystery never to be solved, his death and his existence equally a doubt,—whose was the agony of that death-moment?

Nathaniel Hawthorne

THE GREAT CARBUNCLE[1]

A MYSTERY OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

At nightfall once in the olden time, on the rugged side of one of the Crystal Hills, a party of adventurers were refreshing themselves after a toilsome and fruitless quest for the Great Carbuncle. They had come thither, not as friends nor partners in the enterprise, but each, save one youthful pair, impelled by his own selfish and solitary longing for this wondrous gem. Their feeling of brotherhood, however, was strong enough to induce them to contribute a mutual aid in building a rude hut of branches and kindling a great fire of shattered pines that had drifted down the headlong current of the Amonoosuck, on the lower bank of which they were to pass the night. There was but one of their number, perhaps, who had become so estranged from natural sympathies by the absorbing spell of the pursuit as to acknowledge no satisfaction at the sight of human faces in the remote and solitary region whither they had ascended. A vast extent of wilderness lay between them and the nearest settlement, while scant a mile above their heads was that black verge where the hills throw off their shaggy mantle of forest-trees and either robe themselves in clouds or tower naked into the sky. The roar of the Amonoosuck would have been too awful for endurance if only a solitary man had listened while the mountain stream talked with the wind.

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[1] The Indian tradition on which this somewhat extravagant tale is founded is both too wild and too beautiful to be adequately wrought up in prose. Sullivan, in his History of Maine, written since the Revolution, remarks that even then the existence of the Great Carbuncle was not entirely discredited.

The adventurers, therefore, exchanged hospitable greetings and welcomed one another to the hut where each man was the host and all were the guests of the whole company. They spread their individual supplies of food on the flat surface of a rock and partook of a general repast; at the close of which a sentiment of good-fellowship was perceptible among the party, though repressed by the idea that the renewed search for the Great Carbuncle must make them strangers again in the morning. Seven men and one young woman, they warmed themselves together at the fire, which extended its bright wall along the whole front of their wigwam. As they observed the various and contrasted figures that made up the assemblage, each man looking like a caricature of himself in the unsteady light that flickered over him, they came mutually to the conclusion that an odder society had never met, in city or wilderness, on mountain or plain.

The eldest of the group—a tall, lean, weatherbeaten man some sixty years of age—was clad in the skins of wild animals whose fashion of dress he did well to imitate, since the deer, the wolf, and the bear had long been his most intimate companions. He was one of those ill-fated mortals, such as the Indians told of, whom in their early youth the Great Carbuncle smote with a peculiar madness and became the passionate dream of their existence. All who visited that region knew him as "the Seeker," and by no other name. As none could remember when he first took up the search, there went a fable in the valley of the Saco that for his inordinate lust after the Great Carbuncle he had been condemned to wander among the mountains till the end of time, still with the same feverish hopes at sunrise, the same despair at eve. Near this miserable Seeker sat a little elderly personage wearing a high-crowned hat shaped somewhat like a crucible. He was from beyond the sea—a Doctor Cacaphodel, who had wilted and dried himself into a mummy by continually stooping over charcoal-furnaces and inhaling unwholesome fumes during his researches in chemistry and alchemy. It was told of him—whether truly or not—that at the commencement of his studies he had drained his body of all its richest blood and wasted it, with other inestimable ingredients, in an unsuccessful experiment, and had never been a well man since. Another of the adventurers was Master Ichabod Pigsnort, a weighty merchant and selectman of Boston, and an elder of the famous Mr. Norton's church. His enemies had a ridiculous story that Master Pigsnort was accustomed to spend a whole hour after prayer-time every morning and evening in wallowing naked among an immense quantity of pine-tree shillings, which were the earliest silver coinage of Massachusetts. The fourth whom we shall notice had no name that his companions knew of, and was chiefly distinguished by a sneer that always contorted his thin visage, and by a prodigious pair of spectacles which were supposed to deform and discolor the whole face of nature to this gentleman's perception. The fifth adventurer likewise lacked a name, which was the greater pity, as he appeared to be a poet. He was a bright-eyed man, but woefully pined away, which was no more than natural if, as some people affirmed, his ordinary diet was fog, morning mist, and a slice of the densest cloud within his reach, sauced with moonshine whenever he could get it. Certain it is that the poetry which flowed from him had a smack of all these dainties. The sixth of the party was a young man of haughty mien and sat somewhat apart from the rest, wearing his plumed hat loftily among his elders, while the fire glittered on the rich embroidery of his dress and gleamed intensely on the jewelled pommel of his sword. This was the lord De Vere, who when at home was said to spend much of his time in the burial-vault of his dead progenitors rummaging their mouldy coffins in search of all the earthly pride and vainglory that was hidden among bones and dust; so that, besides his own share, he had the collected haughtiness of his whole line of ancestry.

Lastly, there was a handsome youth in rustic garb, and by his side a blooming little person in whom a delicate shade of maiden reserve was just melting into the rich glow of a young wife's affection. Her name was Hannah, and her husband's Matthew—two homely names, yet well enough adapted to the simple pair who seemed strangely out of place among the whimsical fraternity whose wits had been set agog by the Great Carbuncle.

Beneath the shelter of one hut, in the bright blaze of the same fire, sat this varied group of adventurers, all so intent upon a single object that of whatever else they began to speak their closing words were sure to be illuminated with the Great Carbuncle. Several related the circumstances that brought them thither. One had listened to a traveller's tale of this marvellous stone in his own distant country, and had immediately been seized with such a thirst for beholding it as could only be quenched in its intensest lustre. Another, so long ago as when the famous Captain Smith visited these coasts, had seen it blazing far at sea, and had felt no rest in all the intervening years till now that he took up the search. A third, being encamped on a hunting-expedition full forty miles south of the White Mountains, awoke at midnight and beheld the Great Carbuncle gleaming like a meteor, so that the shadows of the trees fell backward from it. They spoke of the innumerable attempts which had been made to reach the spot, and of the singular fatality which had hitherto withheld success from all adventurers, though it might seem so easy to follow to its source a light that overpowered the moon and almost matched the sun. It was observable that each smiled scornfully at the madness of every other in anticipating better fortune than the past, yet nourished a scarcely-hidden conviction that he would himself be the favored one. As if to allay their too sanguine hopes, they recurred to the Indian traditions that a spirit kept watch about the gem and bewildered those who sought it either by removing it from peak to peak of the higher hills or by calling up a mist from the enchanted lake over which it hung. But these tales were deemed unworthy of credit, all professing to believe that the search had been baffled by want of sagacity or perseverance in the adventurers, or such other causes as might naturally obstruct the passage to any given point among the intricacies of forest, valley, and mountain.

In a pause of the conversation the wearer of the prodigious spectacles looked round upon the party, making each individual in turn the object of the sneer which invariably dwelt upon his countenance.

"So, fellow-pilgrims," said he, "here we are, seven wise men and one fair damsel, who doubtless is as wise as any graybeard of the company. Here we are, I say, all bound on the same goodly enterprise. Methinks, now, it were not amiss that each of us declare what he proposes to do with the Great Carbuncle, provided he have the good hap to clutch it.—What says our friend in the bear skin? How mean you, good sir, to enjoy the prize which you have been seeking the Lord knows how long among the Crystal Hills?"

"How enjoy it!" exclaimed the aged Seeker, bitterly. "I hope for no enjoyment from it: that folly has passed long ago. I keep up the search for this accursed stone because the vain ambition of my youth has become a fate upon me in old age. The pursuit alone is my strength, the energy of my soul, the warmth of my blood, and the pith and marrow of my bones! Were I to turn my back upon it, I should fall down dead on the hither side of the notch which is the gateway of this mountain region. Yet not to have my wasted lifetime back again would I give up my hopes of the Great Carbuncle. Having found it, I shall bear it to a certain cavern that I wot of, and there, grasping it in my arms, lie down and die and keep it buried with me forever."

"O wretch regardless of the interests of science," cried Doctor Cacaphodel, with philosophic indignation, "thou art not worthy to behold even from afar off the lustre of this most precious gem that ever was concocted in the laboratory of Nature. Mine is the sole purpose for which a wise man may desire the possession of the Great Carbuncle. Immediately on obtaining it—for I have a presentiment, good people, that the prize is reserved to crown my scientific reputation—I shall return to Europe and employ my remaining years in reducing it to its first elements. A portion of the stone will I grind to impalpable powder, other parts shall be dissolved in acids or whatever solvents will act upon so admirable a composition, and the remainder I design to melt in the crucible or set on fire with the blowpipe. By these various methods I shall gain an accurate analysis, and finally bestow the result of my labors upon the world in a folio volume."

"Excellent!" quoth the man with the spectacles. "Nor need you hesitate, learned sir, on account of the necessary destruction of the gem, since the perusal of your folio may teach every mother's son of us to concoct a Great Carbuncle of his own."

"But verily," said Master Ichabod Pigsnort, "for mine own part, I object to the making of these counterfeits, as being calculated to reduce the marketable value of the true gem. I tell ye frankly, sirs, I have an interest in keeping up the price. Here have I quitted my regular traffic, leaving my warehouse in the care of my clerks, and putting my credit to great hazard, and, furthermore, have put myself in peril of death or captivity by the accursed heathen savages, and all this without daring to ask the prayers of the congregation, because the quest for the Great Carbuncle is deemed little better than a traffic with the evil one. Now, think ye that I would have done this grievous wrong to my soul, body, reputation, and estate without a reasonable chance of profit?"

"Not I, pious Master Pigsnort," said the man with the spectacles. "I never laid such a great folly to thy charge."

"Truly, I hope not," said the merchant. "Now, as touching this Great Carbuncle, I am free to own that I have never had a glimpse of it, but, be it only the hundredth part so bright as people tell, it will surely outvalue the Great Mogul's best diamond, which he holds at an incalculable sum; wherefore, I am minded to put the Great Carbuncle on shipboard and voyage with it to England, France, Spain, Italy, or into heathendom if Providence should send me thither, and, in a word, dispose of the gem to the best bidder among the potentates of the earth, that he may place it among his crown-jewels. If any of ye have a wiser plan, let him expound it."

"That have I, thou sordid man!" exclaimed the poet. "Dost thou desire nothing brighter than gold, that thou wouldst transmute all this ethereal lustre into such dross as thou wallowest in already? For myself, hiding the jewel under my cloak, I shall hie me back to my attic-chamber, in one of the darksome alleys of London. There night and day will I gaze upon it. My soul shall drink its radiance; it shall be diffused throughout my intellectual powers and gleam brightly in every line of poesy that I indite. Thus long ages after I am gone the splendor of the Great Carbuncle will blaze around my name."

"Well said, Master Poet!" cried he of the spectacles. "Hide it under thy cloak, sayest thou? Why, it will gleam through the holes and make thee look like a jack-o'-lantern!"

"To think," ejaculated the lord De Vere, rather to himself than his companions, the best of whom he held utterly unworthy of his intercourse—"to think that a fellow in a tattered cloak should talk of conveying the Great Carbuncle to a garret in Grub Street! Have not I resolved within myself that the whole earth contains no fitter ornament for the great hall of my ancestral castle? There shall it flame for ages, making a noonday of midnight, glittering on the suits of armor, the banners and escutcheons, that hang around the wall, and keeping bright the memory of heroes. Wherefore have all other adventurers sought the prize in vain but that I might win it and make it a symbol of the glories of our lofty line? And never on the diadem of the White Mountains did the Great Carbuncle hold a place half so honored as is reserved for it in the hall of the De Veres!"

"It is a noble thought," said the Cynic, with an obsequious sneer. "Yet, might I presume to say so, the gem would make a rare sepulchral lamp, and would display the glories of Your Lordship's progenitors more truly in the ancestral vault than in the castle-hall."

"Nay, forsooth," observed Matthew, the young rustic, who sat hand in hand with his bride, "the gentleman has bethought himself of a profitable use for this bright stone. Hannah here and I are seeking it for a like purpose."

"How, fellow?" exclaimed His Lordship, in surprise. "What castle-hall hast thou to hang it in?"

"No castle," replied Matthew, "but as neat a cottage as any within sight of the Crystal Hills. Ye must know, friends, that Hannah and I, being wedded the last week, have taken up the search of the Great Carbuncle because we shall need its light in the long winter evenings and it will be such a pretty thing to show the neighbors when they visit us! It will shine through the house, so that we may pick up a pin in any corner, and will set all the windows aglowing as if there were a great fire of pine-knots in the chimney. And then how pleasant, when we awake in the night, to be able to see one another's faces!"

There was a general smile among the adventurers at the simplicity of the young couple's project in regard to this wondrous and invaluable stone, with which the greatest monarch on earth might have been proud to adorn his palace. Especially the man with spectacles, who had sneered at all the company in turn, now twisted his visage into such an expression of ill-natured mirth that Matthew asked him, rather peevishly, what he himself meant to do with the Great Carbuncle.

"The Great Carbuncle!" answered the Cynic, with ineffable scorn. "Why, you blockhead, there is no such thing in *rerum natura*. I have come three thousand miles, and am resolved to set my foot on every peak of these mountains and poke my head into every chasm for the sole purpose of demonstrating to the satisfaction of any man one whit less an ass than thyself that the Great Carbuncle is all a humbug."

Vain and foolish were the motives that had brought most of the adventurers to the Crystal Hills, but none so vain, so foolish, and so impious too, as that of the scoffer with the prodigious spectacles. He was one of those wretched and evil men whose yearnings are downward to the darkness instead of heavenward, and who, could they but extinguish the lights which God hath kindled for us, would count the midnight gloom their chiefest glory.

As the Cynic spoke, several of the party were startled by a gleam of red splendor, that showed the huge shapes of the surrounding mountains and the rock-bestrewn bed of the turbulent river, with an illumination unlike that of their fire, on the trunks and black boughs of the forest-trees. They listened for the roll of thunder, but heard nothing, and were glad that the tempest came not near them. The stars—those dial-points of heaven—now warned the adventurers to close their eyes on the blazing logs and open them in dreams to the glow of the Great Carbuncle.

The young married couple had taken their lodgings in the farthest corner of the wigwam, and were separated from the rest of the party by a curtain of curiously woven twigs such as might have hung in deep festoons around the bridal-bower of Eve. The modest little wife had wrought this piece of tapestry while the other guests were talking. She and her husband fell asleep with hands tenderly clasped, and awoke from visions of unearthly radiance to meet the more blessed light of one another's eyes. They awoke at the same instant and with one happy smile beaming over their two faces, which grew brighter with their consciousness of the reality of life and love. But no sooner did she recollect where they were than the bride peeped through the interstices of the leafy curtain and saw that the outer room of the hut was deserted.

"Up, dear Matthew!" cried she, in haste. "The strange folk are all gone. Up this very minute, or we shall lose the Great Carbuncle!"

In truth, so little did these poor young people deserve the mighty prize which had lured them thither that they had slept peacefully all night and till the summits of the hills were glittering with sunshine, while the other adventurers had tossed their limbs in feverish wakefulness or dreamed of climbing precipices, and set off to realize their dreams with the earliest peep of dawn. But Matthew and Hannah after their calm rest were as light as two young deer, and merely stopped to say their prayers and wash themselves in a cold pool of the Amonoosuck, and then to taste a morsel of food ere they turned their faces to the mountain-side. It was a sweet emblem of conjugal affection as they toiled up the difficult ascent, gathering strength from the mutual aid which they afforded.

After several little accidents, such as a torn robe, a lost shoe, and the entanglement of Hannah's hair in a bough, they reached the upper verge of the forest and were now to pursue a more adventurous course. The innumerable trunks and heavy foliage of the trees had hitherto shut in their thoughts, which now shrank affrighted from the region of wind and cloud and naked rocks and desolate sunshine that rose immeasurably above them. They gazed back at the obscure wilderness which they had traversed, and longed to be buried again in its depths rather than trust themselves to so vast and visible a solitude.

"Shall we go on?" said Matthew, throwing his arm round Hannah's waist both to protect her and to comfort his heart by drawing her close to it.

But the little bride, simple as she was, had a woman's love of jewels, and could not forego the hope of possessing the very brightest in the world, in spite of the perils with which it must be won.

"Let us climb a little higher," whispered she, yet tremulously, as she turned her face upward to the lonely sky.

"Come, then," said Matthew, mustering his manly courage and drawing her along with him; for she became timid again the moment that he grew bold.

And upward, accordingly, went the pilgrims of the Great Carbuncle, now treading upon the tops and thickly interwoven branches of dwarf pines which by the growth of centuries, though mossy with age, had barely reached three feet in altitude. Next they came to masses and fragments of naked rock heaped confusedly together, like a cairn reared by giants in memory of a giant chief. In this bleak realm of upper air nothing breathed, nothing grew; there was no life but what was concentred in their two hearts; they had climbed so high that Nature herself seemed no longer to keep them company. She lingered beneath them within the verge of the forest-trees, and sent a farewell glance after her children as they strayed where her own green footprints had never been. But soon they were to be hidden from her eye. Densely and dark the mists began to gather below, casting black spots of shadow on the vast landscape and sailing heavily to one centre, as if the loftiest mountain peak had summoned a council of its kindred clouds. Finally the vapors welded themselves, as it were, into a mass, presenting the appearance of a pavement over which the wanderers might have trodden, but where they would vainly have sought an avenue to the blessed earth which they had lost.

And the lovers yearned to behold that green earth again—more intensely, alas! than beneath a clouded sky they had ever desired a glimpse of heaven. They even felt it a relief to their desolation when the mists, creeping gradually up the mountain, concealed its lonely peak, and thus annihilated—at least, for them—the whole region of visible space. But they drew closer together with a fond and melancholy gaze, dreading lest the universal cloud should snatch them from each other's sight. Still, perhaps, they would have been resolute to climb as far and as high between earth and heaven as they could find foothold if Hannah's strength had not begun to fail, and with that her courage also. Her breath grew short. She refused to burden her husband with her weight, but often tottered against his side, and recovered herself each time by a feebler effort. At last, she sank down on one of the rocky steps of the acclivity.

"We are lost, dear Matthew," said she, mournfully; "we shall never find our way to the earth again. And oh how happy we might have been in our cottage!"

"Dear heart, we will yet be happy there," answered Matthew. "Look! In this direction, the sunshine penetrates the dismal mist; by its aid I can direct our course to the passage of the Notch. Let us go back, love, and dream no more of the Great Carbuncle."

"The sun cannot be yonder," said Hannah, with despondence. "By this time it must be noon; if there could ever be any sunshine here, it would come from above our heads."

"But look!" repeated Matthew, in a somewhat altered tone. "It is brightening every moment. If not sunshine, what can it be?"

Nor could the young bride any longer deny that a radiance was breaking through the mist and changing its dim hue to a dusky red, which continually grew more vivid, as if brilliant particles were interfused with the gloom. Now, also, the cloud began to roll away from the mountain, while, as it heavily withdrew, one object after another started out of its impenetrable obscurity into sight with precisely the effect of a new creation before the indistinctness of the old chaos had been completely swallowed up. As the process went on they saw the gleaming of water close at their feet, and found themselves on the very border of a mountain lake, deep, bright, clear, and calmly beautiful, spreading from brim to brim of a basin that had been scooped out of the solid rock. A ray of glory flashed across its surface. The pilgrims looked whence it should proceed, but closed their eyes, with a thrill of awful admiration, to exclude the fervid splendor that glowed from the brow of a cliff impending over the enchanted lake.

For the simple pair had reached that lake of mystery, and found the long-sought shrine of the Great Carbuncle.

They threw their arms around each other and trembled at their own success, for as the legends of this wondrous gem rushed thick upon their memory they felt themselves marked out by fate, and the consciousness was fearful. Often from childhood upward they had seen it shining like a distant star, and now that star was throwing its intensest lustre on their hearts. They seemed changed to one another's eyes in the red brilliancy that flamed upon their cheeks, while it lent the same fire to the lake, the rocks, and sky, and to the mists which had rolled back before its power. But with their next glance they beheld an object that drew their attention even from the mighty stone. At the base of the cliff, directly beneath the Great Carbuncle, appeared the figure of a man with his arms extended in the act of climbing and his face turned upward as if to drink the full gush of splendor. But he stirred not, no more than if changed to marble.

"It is the Seeker," whispered Hannah, convulsively grasping her husband's arm. "Matthew, he is dead."

"The joy of success has killed him," replied Matthew, trembling violently. "Or perhaps the very light of the Great Carbuncle was death."

"The Great Carbuncle!" cried a peevish voice behind them. "The Great Humbug! If you have found it, prithee point it out to me."

They turned their heads, and there was the Cynic with his prodigious spectacles set carefully on his nose, staring now at the lake, now at the rocks, now at the distant masses of vapor, now right at the Great Carbuncle itself, yet seemingly as unconscious of its light as if all the scattered clouds were condensed about his person. Though its radiance actually threw the shadow of the unbeliever at his own feet as he turned his back upon the glorious jewel, he would not be convinced that there was the least glimmer there.

"Where is your Great Humbug?" he repeated. "I challenge you to make me see it."

"There!" said Matthew, incensed at such perverse blindness, and turning the Cynic round toward the illuminated cliff. "Take off those abominable spectacles, and you cannot help seeing it."

Now these colored spectacles probably darkened the Cynic's sight, in at least as great a degree as the smoked glasses through which people gaze at an eclipse. With resolute bravado, however, he snatched them from his nose, and fixed a bold stare full upon the ruddy blaze of the Great Carbuncle. But scarcely had he encountered it when, with a deep, shuddering groan, he dropped his head and pressed both hands across his miserable eyes. Thenceforth there was in very truth no light of the Great Carbuncle, nor any other light on earth, nor light of heaven itself, for the poor Cynic. So long accustomed to view all objects through a medium that deprived them of every glimpse of brightness, a single flash of so glorious a phenomenon, striking upon his naked vision, had blinded him for ever.

'Matthew," said Hannah, clinging to him, "let us go hence."

Matthew saw that she was faint, and kneeling down, supported her in his arms while he threw some of the thrillingly cold water of the enchanted lake upon her face and bosom. It revived her, but could not renovate her courage.

"Yes, dearest," cried Matthew, pressing her tremulous form to his breast; "we will go hence and return to our humble cottage. The blessed sunshine and the quiet moonlight shall come through our window. We will kindle the cheerful glow of our hearth at eventide and be happy in its light. But never again will we desire more light than all the world may share with us."

"No," said his bride, "for how could we live by day or sleep by night in this awful blaze of the Great Carbuncle?"

Out of the hollow of their hands, they drank each a draught from the lake, which presented them its waters uncontaminated by an earthly lip. Then, lending their guidance to the blinded Cynic, who uttered not a word, and even stifled his groans in his own most wretched heart, they began to descend the mountain. Yet as they left the shore, till then untrodden, of the spirit's lake, they threw a farewell glance toward the cliff and beheld the vapors gathering in dense volumes, through which the gem burned duskily.

As touching the other pilgrims of the Great Carbuncle, the legend goes on to tell that the worshipful Master Ichabod Pigsnort soon gave up the quest as a desperate speculation, and wisely resolved to betake himself again to his warehouse, near the town-dock, in Boston. But as he passed through the Notch of the mountains a war-party of Indians captured our unlucky merchant and carried him to Montreal, there holding him in bondage till by the payment of a heavy ransom he had woefully subtracted from his hoard of pine-tree shillings. By his long absence, moreover, his affairs had become so disordered that for the rest of his life, instead of wallowing in silver, he had seldom a sixpence-worth of copper. Doctor Cacaphodel, the alchemist, returned to his laboratory with a prodigious fragment of granite, which he ground to powder, dissolved in acids, melted in the crucible and burned with the blowpipe, and published the result of his experiments in one of the heaviest folios of the day. And for all these purposes the gem itself could not have answered better than the granite. The poet, by a somewhat similar mistake, made prize of a great piece of ice which he found in a sunless chasm of the mountains, and swore that it corresponded in all points with his idea of the Great Carbuncle. The critics say that, if his poetry lacked the splendor of the gem, it retained all the coldness of the ice. The lord De Vere went back to his ancestral hall, where he contented himself with a wax-lighted chandelier, and filled in due course of time another coffin in the ancestral vault. As the funeral torches gleamed within that dark receptacle, there was no need of the Great Carbuncle to show the vanity of earthly pomp.

The Cynic, having cast aside his spectacles, wandered about the world a miserable object, and was punished with an agonizing desire of light for the wilful blindness of his former life. The whole night long he would lift his splendor-blasted orbs to the moon and stars; he turned his face eastward at sunrise as duly as a Persian idolater; he made a pilgrimage to Rome to witness the magnificent illumination of St. Peter's Church, and finally perished in the Great Fire of London, into the midst of which he had thrust himself with the desperate idea of catching one feeble ray from the blaze that was kindling earth and heaven.

Matthew and his bride spent many peaceful years and were fond of telling the legend of the Great Carbuncle. The tale, however, towards the close of their lengthened lives, did not meet with the full credence that had been accorded to it by those who remembered the ancient lustre of the gem. For it is affirmed that from the hour when two mortals had shown themselves so simply wise as to reject a jewel which would have dimmed all earthly things its splendor waned. When other pilgrims reached the cliff, they found only an opaque stone with particles of mica glittering on its surface. There is also a tradition that as the youthful pair departed the gem was loosened from the forehead of the cliff and fell into the enchanted lake, and that at noontide the Seeker's form may still be seen to bend over its quenchless gleam. Some few believe that this inestimable stone is blazing as of old, and say that they have caught its radiance, like a flash of summer lightning, far down the valley of the Saco. And be it owned that many a mile from the Crystal Hills I saw a wondrous light around their summits, and was lured by the faith of poesy to be the latest pilgrim of the Great Carbuncle.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

THE WEDDING-KNELL

There is a certain church in the city of New York which I have always regarded with peculiar interest on account of a marriage there solemnized under very singular circumstances in my grandmother's girlhood. That venerable lady chanced to be a spectator of the scene, and ever after made it her favorite narrative. Whether the edifice now standing on the same site be the identical one to which she referred I am not antiquarian enough to know, nor would it be worth while to correct myself, perhaps, of an agreeable error by reading the date of its erection on the tablet over the door. It is a stately church surrounded by an enclosure of the loveliest green, within which appear urns, pillars, obelisks, and other forms of monumental marble, the tributes of private affection or more splendid memorials of historic dust. With such a place, though the tumult of the city rolls beneath its tower, one would be willing to connect some legendary interest.

The marriage might be considered as the result of an early engagement, though there had been two intermediate weddings on the lady's part and forty years of celibacy on that of the gentleman. At sixty-five Mr. Ellenwood was a shy but not quite a secluded man; selfish, like all men who brood over their own hearts, yet manifesting on rare occasions a vein of generous sentiment; a scholar throughout life, though always an indolent one, because his studies had no definite object either of public advantage or personal ambition; a gentleman, high-bred and fastidiously delicate, yet sometimes requiring a considerable relaxation in his behalf of the common rules of society. In truth, there were so many anomalies in his character, and, though shrinking with diseased sensibility from public notice, it had been his fatality so often to become the topic of the day by some wild eccentricity of conduct, that people searched his lineage for a hereditary taint of insanity. But there was no need of this. His caprices had their origin in a mind that lacked the support of an engrossing purpose, and in feelings that preyed upon themselves for want of other food. If he were mad, it was the consequence, and not the cause, of an aimless and abortive life.

The widow was as complete a contrast to her third bridegroom in everything but age as can well be conceived. Compelled to relinquish her first engagement, she had been united to a man of twice her own years, to whom she became an exemplary wife, and by whose death she was left in possession of a splendid fortune. A Southern gentleman considerably younger than herself succeeded to her hand and carried her to Charleston, where after many uncomfortable years she found herself again a widow. It would have been singular if any uncommon delicacy of feeling had survived through such a life as Mrs. Dabney's; it could not but be crushed and killed by her early disappointment, the cold duty of her first marriage, the dislocation of the heart's principles consequent on a second union, and the unkindness of her Southern husband, which had inevitably driven her to connect the idea of his death with that of her comfort. To be brief, she was that wisest but unloveliest variety of woman, a philosopher, bearing troubles of the heart with equanimity, dispensing with all that should have been her happiness and making the best of what remained. Sage in most matters, the widow was perhaps the more amiable for the one frailty that made her ridiculous. Being childless, she could not remain beautiful by proxy in the person of a daughter; she therefore refused to grow old and ugly on any consideration; she struggled with Time, and held fast her roses in spite of him, till the venerable thief appeared to have relinquished the spoil as not worth the trouble of acquiring it.

The approaching marriage of this woman of the world with such an unworldly man as Mr. Ellenwood was announced soon after Mrs. Dabney's return to her native city. Superficial observers, and deeper ones, seemed to concur in supposing that the lady must have borne no inactive part in arranging the affair; there were considerations of expediency which she would be far more likely to appreciate than Mr. Ellenwood, and there was just the specious phantom of sentiment and romance in this late union of two early lovers which sometimes makes a fool of a woman who has lost her true feelings among the accidents of life. All the wonder was how the gentleman, with his lack of worldly wisdom and agonizing consciousness of ridicule, could have been induced to take a measure at once so prudent and so laughable. But while people talked the wedding-day arrived. The ceremony was to be solemnized according to the Episcopalian forms and in open church, with a degree of publicity that attracted many spectators, who occupied the front seats of the galleries, and the pews near the altar and along the broad aisle. It had been arranged, or possibly it was the custom of the day, that the parties should proceed separately to church. By some accident the bridegroom was a little less punctual than the widow and her bridal attendants, with whose arrival, after this tedious but necessary preface, the action of our tale may be said to commence.

The clumsy wheels of several old-fashioned coaches were heard, and the gentlemen and ladies composing the bridal-party came through the church door with the sudden and gladsome effect of a burst of sunshine. The whole group, except the principal figure, was made up of youth and gayety. As they streamed up the broad aisle, while the pews and pillars seemed to brighten on either side, their steps were as buoyant as if they mistook the church for a ball-room and were ready to dance hand in hand to the altar. So brilliant was the spectacle that few took notice of a singular phenomenon that had marked its entrance. At the moment when the bride's foot touched the threshold the bell swung heavily in the tower above her and sent forth its deepest knell. The vibrations died away, and returned with prolonged solemnity as she entered the body of the church.

"Good heavens! What an omen!" whispered a young lady to her lover.

"On my honor," replied the gentleman, "I believe the bell has the good taste to toll of its own accord. What has she to do with weddings? If you, dearest Julia, were approaching the altar, the bell would ring out its merriest peal. It has only a funeral-knell for her."

The bride and most of her company had been too much occupied with the bustle of entrance to hear the first boding stroke of the bell—or, at least, to reflect on the singularity of such a welcome to the altar. They therefore continued to advance with undiminished gayety. The gorgeous dresses of the time—the crimson velvet coats, the gold-laced hats, the hoop-petticoats, the silk, satin, brocade, and embroidery, the buckles, canes, and swords, all displayed to the best advantage on persons suited to such finery—made the group appear more like a bright-colored picture than anything real. But by what perversity of taste had the artist represented his principal figure as so wrinkled and decayed, while yet he had decked her out in the brightest splendor of attire, as if the loveliest maiden had suddenly withered into age and become a moral to the beautiful around her? On they went, however, and had glittered along about a third of the aisle, when another stroke of the bell seemed to fill the church with a visible gloom, dimming and obscuring the bright pageant till it shone forth again as from a mist.

This time the party wavered, stopped and huddled closer together, while a slight scream was heard from some of the ladies and a confused whispering among the gentlemen. Thus tossing to and fro, they might have been fancifully compared to a splendid bunch of flowers suddenly shaken by a puff of wind which threatened to scatter the leaves of an old brown, withered rose on the same stalk with two dewy buds, such being the emblem of the widow between her fair young bridemaids. But her heroism was admirable. She had started with an irrepressible shudder, as if the stroke of the bell had fallen directly on her heart; then, recovering herself, while her attendants were yet in dismay, she took the lead and paced calmly up the aisle. The bell continued to swing, strike, and vibrate with the same doleful regularity as when a corpse is on its way to the tomb.

"My young friends here have their nerves a little shaken," said the widow, with a smile, to the clergyman at the altar. "But so many weddings have been ushered in with the merriest peal of the bells, and yet turned out unhappily, that I shall hope for better fortune under such different auspices."

"Madam," answered the rector, in great perplexity, "this strange occurrence brings to my mind a marriage-sermon of the famous Bishop Taylor wherein he mingles so many thoughts of mortality and future woe that, to speak somewhat after his own rich style, he seems to hang the bridal-chamber in black and cut the wedding-garment out of a coffin-pall. And it has been the custom of divers nations to infuse something of sadness into their marriage ceremonies, so to keep death in mind while contracting that engagement which is life's chiefest business. Thus we may draw a sad but profitable moral from this funeral-knell."

But, though the clergyman might have given his moral even a keener point, he did not fail to despatch an attendant to inquire into the mystery and stop those sounds so dismally appropriate to such a marriage. A brief space elapsed, during which the silence was broken only by whispers and a few suppressed titterings among the wedding-party and the spectators, who after the first shock were disposed to draw an ill-natured merriment from the affair. The young have less charity for aged follies than the old for those of youth. The widow's glance was observed to wander for an instant toward a window of the church, as if searching for the time-worn marble that she had dedicated to her first husband; then her eyelids dropped over their faded orbs and her thoughts were drawn irresistibly to another grave. Two buried men with a voice at her ear and a cry afar off were calling her to lie down beside them. Perhaps, with momentary truth of feeling, she thought how much happier had been her fate if, after years of bliss, the bell were now tolling for her funeral and she were followed to the grave by the old affection of her earliest lover, long her husband. But why had she returned to him when their cold hearts shrank from each other's embrace?

Still the death-bell tolled so mournfully that the sunshine seemed to fade in the air. A whisper, communicated from those who stood nearest the windows, now spread through the church: a hearse with a train of several coaches was creeping along the street, conveying some dead man to the churchyard, while the bride awaited a living one at the altar. Immediately after, the footsteps of the bridegroom and his friends were heard at the door. The widow looked down the aisle and clenched the arm of one of her bridemaids in her bony hand with such unconscious violence that the fair girl trembled.

"You frighten me, my dear madam," cried she. "For heaven's sake, what is the matter?"

"Nothing, my dear—nothing," said the widow; then, whispering close to her ear, "There is a foolish fancy that I cannot get rid of. I am expecting my bridegroom to come into the church with my first two husbands for groomsmen!"

"Look! look!" screamed the bridemaid. "What is here? The funeral!"

As she spoke a dark procession paced into the church. First came an old man and woman, like chief mourners at a funeral, attired from head to foot in the deepest black, all but their pale features and hoary hair, he leaning on a staff and supporting her decrepit form with his nerveless arm. Behind appeared another and another pair, as aged, as black and mournful as the first. As they drew near the widow recognized in every face some trait of former friends long forgotten, but now returning as if from their old graves to warn her to prepare a shroud, or, with purpose almost as unwelcome, to exhibit their wrinkles and infirmity and claim her as their companion by the tokens of her own decay. Many a merry night had she danced with them in youth, and now in joyless age she felt that some withered partner should request her hand and all unite in a dance of death to the music of the funeral-bell.

While these aged mourners were passing up the aisle it was observed that from pew to pew the spectators shuddered with irrepressible awe as some object hitherto concealed by the intervening figures came full in sight. Many turned away their faces; others kept a fixed and rigid stare, and a young girl giggled hysterically and fainted with the laughter on her lips. When the spectral procession approached the altar, each couple separated and slowly diverged, till in the centre appeared a form that had been worthily ushered in with all this gloomy pomp, the death-knell and the funeral. It was the bridegroom in his shroud.

No garb but that of the grave could have befitted such a death-like aspect. The eyes, indeed, had the wild gleam of a sepulchral lamp; all else was fixed in the stern calmness which old men wear in the coffin. The corpse stood motionless, but addressed the widow in accents that seemed to melt into the clang of the bell, which fell heavily on the air while he spoke.

"Come, my bride!" said those pale lips. "The hearse is ready; the sexton stands waiting for us at the door of the tomb. Let us be married, and then to our coffins!"

How shall the widow's horror be represented? It gave her the ghastliness of a dead man's bride. Her youthful friends stood apart, shuddering at the mourners, the shrouded bridegroom and herself; the whole scene expressed by the strongest imagery the vain struggle of the gilded vanities of this world when opposed to age, infirmity, sorrow, and death.

The awestruck silence was first broken by the clergyman.

"Mr. Ellenwood," said he, soothingly, yet with somewhat of authority, "you are not well. Your mind has been agitated by the unusual circumstances in which you are placed. The ceremony must be deferred. As an old friend, let me entreat you to return home."

"Home—yes; but not without my bride," answered he, in the same hollow accents. "You deem this mockery—perhaps madness. Had I bedizened my aged and broken frame with scarlet and embroidery, had I forced my withered lips to smile at my dead heart, that might have been mockery or madness; but now let young and old declare which of us has come hither without a wedding-garment—the bridegroom or the bride."

He stepped forward at a ghostly pace and stood beside the widow, contrasting the awful simplicity of his shroud with the glare and glitter in which she had arrayed herself for this unhappy scene. None that beheld them could deny the terrible strength of the moral which his disordered intellect had contrived to draw.

"Cruel! cruel!" groaned the heartstricken bride.

"Cruel?" repeated he; then, losing his deathlike composure in a wild bitterness, "Heaven judge which of us has been cruel to the other! In youth you deprived me of my happiness, my hopes, my aims; you took away all the substance of my life and made it a dream without reality enough even to grieve at—with only a pervading gloom, through which I walked wearily and cared not whither. But after forty years, when I have built my tomb and would not give up the thought of resting there—no, not for such a life as we once pictured—you call me to the altar. At your summons I am here. But other husbands have enjoyed your youth, your beauty, your warmth of heart and all that could be termed your life. What is there for me but your decay and death? And therefore I have bidden these funeral-friends, and bespoken the sexton's deepest knell, and am come in my shroud to wed you as with a burial-service, that we may join our hands at the door of the sepulchre and enter it together."

It was not frenzy, it was not merely the drunkenness of strong emotion in a heart unused to it, that now wrought upon the bride. The stern lesson of the day had done its work; her worldliness was gone. She seized the bridegroom's hand.

"Yes!" cried she; "let us wed even at the door of the sepulchre. My life is gone in vanity and emptiness, but at its close there is one true feeling. It has made me what I was in youth: it makes me worthy of you. Time is no more for both of us. Let us wed for eternity."

With a long and deep regard the bridegroom looked into her eyes, while a tear was gathering in his own. How strange that gush of human feeling from the frozen bosom of a corpse! He wiped away the tear, even with his shroud.

"Beloved of my youth," said he, "I have been wild. The despair of my whole lifetime had returned at once and maddened me. Forgive and be forgiven. Yes; it is evening with us now, and we have realized none of our morning dreams of happiness. But let us join our hands before the altar as lovers whom adverse circumstances have separated through life, yet who meet again as they are leaving it and find their earthly affection changed into something holy as religion. And what is time to the married of eternity?"

Amid the tears of many and a swell of exalted sentiment in those who felt aright was solemnized the union of two immortal souls. The train of withered mourners, the hoary bridegroom in his shroud, the pale features of the aged bride and the death-bell tolling through the whole till its deep voice overpowered the marriage-words,—all marked the funeral of earthly hopes. But as the ceremony proceeded, the organ, as if stirred by the sympathies of this impressive scene, poured forth an anthem, first mingling with the dismal knell, then rising to a loftier strain, till the soul looked down upon its woe. And when the awful rite was finished and with cold hand in cold hand the married of eternity withdrew, the organ's peal of solemn triumph drowned the wedding-knell.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

THE GREAT STONE FACE

One afternoon, when the sun was going down, a mother and her little boy sat at the door of their cottage, talking about the Great Stone Face. They had but to lift their eyes, and there it was plainly to be seen, though miles away, with the sunshine brightening all its features.

And what was the Great Stone Face?

Embosomed amongst a family of lofty mountains, there was a valley so spacious that it contained many thousand inhabitants. Some of these good people dwelt in log huts, with the black forest all around them, on the steep and difficult hillsides. Others had their homes in comfortable farm-houses, and cultivated the rich soil on the gentle slopes or level surfaces of the valley. Others, again, were congregated into populous villages, where some wild, highland rivulet, tumbling down from its birthplace in the upper mountain region, had been caught and tamed by human cunning, and compelled to turn the machinery of cotton factories. The inhabitants of this valley, in short, were numerous, and of many modes of life. But all of them, grown people and children, had a kind of familiarity with the Great Stone Face, although some possessed the gift of distinguishing this grand natural phenomenon more perfectly than many of their neighbors.

The Great Stone Face, then, was a work of Nature in her mood of majestic playfulness, formed on the perpendicular side of a mountain by some immense rocks, which had been thrown together in such a position, as, when viewed at a proper distance, precisely to resemble the features of the human countenance. It seemed as if an enormous giant, or a Titan, had sculptured his own likeness on the precipice. There was the broad arch of the forehead, a hundred feet in height; the nose, with its long bridge; and the vast lips, which, if they could have spoken, would have rolled their thunder accents from one end of the valley to the other. True it is that, if the spectator approached too near, he lost the outline of the gigantic visage, and could discern only a heap of ponderous and gigantic rocks, piled in chaotic ruin one upon another. Retracing his steps, however, the wondrous features would again be seen; and the further he withdrew from them, the more like a human face, with all its original divinity intact, did they appear; until, as it grew dim in the distance, with the clouds and glorified vapor of the mountains clustering about it, the Great Stone Face seemed positively to be alive.

It was a happy lot for children to grow up to manhood or womanhood with the Great Stone Face before their eyes, for all the features were noble, and the expression was at once grand and sweet, as if it were the glow of a vast, warm heart, that embraced all mankind in its affections, and had room for more. It was an education only to look at it. According to the belief of many people, the valley owed much of its fertility to this benign aspect that was continually beaming over it, illuminating the clouds, and infusing its tenderness into the sunshine.

As we began with saying, a mother and her little boy sat at their cottage door, gazing at the Great Stone Face, and talking about it. The child's name was Ernest.

"Mother," said he, while the Titanic visage smiled on him, "I wish that it could speak, for it looks so very kindly that its voice must needs be pleasant. If I were to see a man with such a face, I should love him dearly."

"If an old prophecy should come to pass," answered his mother, "we may see a man, some time or other, with exactly such a face as that."

"What prophecy do you mean, dear mother?" eagerly inquired Ernest. "Pray tell me all about it!"

So his mother told him a story that her own mother had told to her, when she herself was younger than little Ernest; a story, not of things that were past, but of what was yet to come; a story, nevertheless, so very old, that even the Indians, who formerly inhabited this valley, had heard it from their forefathers, to whom, as they affirmed, it had been murmured by the mountain streams, and whispered by the wind among the tree-tops. The purport was that, at some future day, a child should be born hereabouts, who was destined to become the greatest and noblest personage of his time, and whose countenance, in manhood, should bear an exact resemblance to the Great Stone Face. Not a few old-fashioned people, and young ones likewise, in the ardor of their hopes, still cherished an enduring faith in this old prophecy. But others, who had seen more of the world, had watched and waited till they were weary, and had beheld no man with such a face, nor any man that proved to be much greater or nobler than his neighbors, concluded it to be nothing but an idle tale. At all events, the great man of the prophecy had not yet appeared.

"Oh. mother. dear mother!" cried Ernest, clapping his hands above his head, "I do hope that I shall live to see him!"

His mother was an affectionate and thoughtful woman, and felt that it was wisest not to discourage the generous hopes of her little boy. So she only said to him, "Perhaps you may."

And Ernest never forgot the story that his mother told him. It was always in his mind, whenever he looked upon the Great Stone Face. He spent his childhood in the log-cottage where he was born, and was dutiful to his mother, and helpful to her in many things, assisting her much with his little hands, and more with his loving heart. In this manner, from a happy yet often pensive child, he grew up to be a mild, quiet, unobtrusive boy, and sun-browned with labor in the fields, but with more intelligence brightening his aspect than is seen in many lads who have been taught at famous schools. Yet Ernest had had no teacher, save only that the Great Stone Face became one to him. When the toil of the day was over, he would gaze at it for hours, until he began to imagine that those vast features recognized him and gave him a smile of kindness and encouragement, responsive to his own look of veneration. We must not take upon us to affirm that this was a mistake, although the Face may have looked no more kindly at Ernest than at all the world besides. But the secret was that the boy's tender and confiding simplicity discerned what other people could not see; and thus the love, which was meant for all, became his peculiar portion.

About this time, there went a rumor throughout the valley, that the great man, foretold from ages long ago, who was to bear a resemblance to the Great Stone Face had appeared at last. It seems that, many years before, a young man had migrated from the valley and settled at a distant seaport, where, after getting together a little money, he had set up as a shopkeeper. His name—but I could never learn whether it was his real one, or a nickname that had grown out of his habits and success in life—was Gathergold. Being shrewd and active, and endowed by Providence with that inscrutable faculty which develops itself in what the world calls luck, he became an exceedingly rich merchant, and owner of a whole fleet of bulky-bottomed ships. All the countries of the globe appeared to join hands for the mere purpose of adding heap after heap to the mountainous accumulation of this one man's wealth. The cold regions of the north, almost within the gloom and shadow of the Arctic Circle, sent him their tribute in the shape of furs; hot Africa sifted for him the golden sands of her rivers, and gathered up the ivory tusks of her great elephants out of the forests; the East came bringing him the rich shawls, and spices, and teas, and the effulgence of diamonds, and the gleaming purity of large pearls. The ocean, not to be behindhand with the earth, yielded up her mighty whales, that Mr. Gathergold might sell their oil, and make a profit on it. Be the original commodity what it might, it was gold within his grasp. It might be said of him, as of Midas in the fable, that whatever he touched with his finger immediately glistened, and grew yellow, and was changed at once into sterling metal, or, which suited him still better, into piles of coin. And, when Mr. Gathergold had become so very rich that it would have taken him a hundred years only to count his wealth, he bethought himself of his native valley, and resolved to go back thither, and end his days where he was born. With this purpose in view, he sent a skillful architect to build him such a palace as should be fit for a man of his vast wealth to live in.

As I have said above, it had already been rumored in the valley that Mr. Gathergold had turned out to be the prophetic personage so long and vainly looked for, and that his visage was the perfect and undeniable similitude of the Great Stone Face. People were the more ready to believe that this must needs be the fact, when they beheld the splendid edifice that rose, as if by enchantment, on the site of his father's old weather-beaten farm-house. The exterior was of marble, so dazzlingly white that it seemed as though the whole structure might melt away in the sunshine, like those humbler ones which Mr. Gathergold, in his young play-days, before his fingers were gifted with the touch of transmutation, had been accustomed to build of snow. It had a richly ornamented portico, supported by tall pillars, beneath which was a lofty door, studded with silver knobs, and made of a kind of variegated wood that had been brought from beyond the sea. The windows, from the floor to the ceiling of each stately apartment, were composed, respectively, of but one enormous pane of glass, so transparently pure that it was said to be a finer medium than even the vacant atmosphere. Hardly anybody had been permitted to see the interior of this palace; but it was reported, and with good semblance of truth, to be far more gorgeous than the outside, insomuch that whatever was iron or brass in other houses, was silver or gold in this; and Mr. Gathergold's bed-chamber, especially, made such a glittering appearance that no ordinary man would have been able to close his eyes there. But, on the other hand, Mr. Gathergold was now so inured to wealth, that perhaps he could not have closed his eyes unless where the gleam of it was certain to find its way beneath his eyelids.

In due time, the mansion was finished; next came the upholsterers, with magnificent furniture; then a whole troop of black and white servants, the harbingers of Mr. Gathergold, who, in his own majestic person, was expected to arrive at sunset. Our friend Ernest, meanwhile, had been deeply stirred by the idea that the great man, the noble man, the man of prophecy, after so many ages of delay, was at length to be made manifest to his native valley. He knew, boy as he was, that there were a thousand ways in which Mr. Gathergold, with his vast wealth, might transform himself into an angel of beneficence, and assume a control over human affairs as wide and benignant as the smile of the Great Stone Face. Full of faith and hope, Ernest doubted not that what the people said was true, and that now he was to behold the living likeness of those wondrous features on the mountain-side. While the boy was still gazing up the valley, and fancying, as he always did, that the Great Stone Face returned his gaze and looked kindly at him, the rumbling of wheels was heard, approaching swiftly along the winding road.

"Here he comes!" cried a group of people who were assembled to witness the arrival. "Here comes the great Mr. Gathergold!"

A carriage, drawn by four horses, dashed round the turn of the road. Within it, thrust partly out of the window, appeared the physiognomy of a little old man, with a skin as yellow as if his own Midas-hand had transmuted it. He had a low forehead, small, sharp eyes, puckered about with innumerable wrinkles, and very thin lips, which he made still thinner by pressing them forcibly together.

"The very image of the Great Stone Face!" shouted the people. "Sure enough, the old prophecy is true; and here we have the great man come, at last!"

And, what greatly perplexed Ernest, they seemed actually to believe that here was the likeness which they spoke of. By the road-side there chanced to be an old beggar-woman and two little beggar-children, stragglers from some far-off region, who, as the carriage rolled onward, held out their hands and lifted up their doleful voices, most piteously beseeching charity. A yellow claw—the very same that had clawed together so much wealth—poked itself out of the coach-window, and dropt some copper coins upon the ground; so that, though the great man's name seems to have been Gathergold, he might just as suitably have been nicknamed Scattercopper. Still, nevertheless, with an earnest shout, and evidently with as much good faith as ever, the people bellowed:

"He is the very image of the Great Stone Face!"

But Ernest turned sadly from the wrinkled shrewdness of that sordid visage, and gazed up the valley, where, amid a gathering mist, gilded by the last sunbeams, he could still distinguish those glorious features which had impressed themselves into his soul. Their aspect cheered him. What did the benign lips seem to say?

"He will come! Fear not, Ernest; the man will come!"

The years went on, and Ernest ceased to be a boy. He had grown to be a young man now. He attracted little notice from the other inhabitants of the valley; for they saw nothing remarkable in his way of life, save that, when the labor of the day was over, he still loved to go apart and gaze and meditate upon the Great Stone Face. According to their idea of the matter, it was a folly, indeed, but pardonable, inasmuch as Ernest was industrious, kind, and neighborly, and neglected no duty for the sake of indulging this idle habit. They knew not that the Great Stone Face had become a teacher to him, and that the sentiment which was expressed in it would enlarge the young man's heart, and fill it with wider and deeper sympathies than other hearts. They knew not that thence would come a better wisdom than could be learned from books, and a better life than could be moulded on the defaced example of other human lives. Neither did Ernest know that the thoughts and affections which came to him so naturally, in the fields and at the fireside, and wherever he communed with himself, were of a higher tone than those which all men shared with him. A simple soul,— simple as when his mother first taught him the old prophecy,— he beheld the marvellous features beaming adown the valley, and still wondered that their human counterpart was so long in making his appearance.

By this time poor Mr. Gathergold was dead and buried; and the oddest part of the matter was that his wealth, which was the body and spirit of his existence, had disappeared before his death, leaving nothing of him but a living skeleton, covered over with a wrinkled yellow skin. Since the melting away of his gold, it had been very generally conceded that there was no such striking resemblance, after all, betwixt the ignoble features of the ruined merchant and that majestic face upon the mountain-side. So the people ceased to honor him during his lifetime, and quietly consigned him to forgetfulness after his decease. Once in a while, it is true, his memory was brought up in connection with the magnificent palace which he had built, and which had long ago been turned into a hotel for the accommodation of strangers, multitudes of whom came, every summer, to visit that famous natural curiosity, the Great Stone Face. Thus, Mr. Gathergold being discredited and thrown into the shade, the man of prophecy was yet to come.

It so happened that a native-born son of the valley many years before, had enlisted as a soldier, and, after a great deal of hard fighting, had now become an illustrious commander. Whatever he may be called in history, he was known in camps and on the battle-field under the nickname of Old Blood-and-Thunder. This war-worn veteran, being now infirm with age and wounds, and weary of the turmoil of a military life, and of the roll of the drum and the clangor of the trumpet, that had so long been ringing in his ears, had lately signified a purpose of returning to his native valley, hoping to find repose where he remembered to have left it. The inhabitants, his old neighbors and their grown-up children, were resolved to welcome the renowned warrior with a salute of cannon and a public dinner; and all the more enthusiastically, it being affirmed that now, at last, the likeness of the Great Stone Face had actually appeared. An aide-de-camp of Old Blood-and-Thunder, travelling through the valley, was said to have been struck with the resemblance. Moreover, the schoolmates and early acquaintances of the general were ready to testify, on oath, that, to the best of their recollection, the aforesaid general had been exceedingly like the majestic image, even when a boy, only that the idea had never occurred to them at that period. Great, therefore, was the excitement throughout the valley; and many people, who had never once thought of glancing at the Great

Stone Face for years before, now spent their time in gazing at it, for the sake of knowing exactly how General Blood-and-Thunder looked.

On the day of the great festival, Ernest, with all the other people of the valley, left their work, and proceeded to the spot where the sylvan banquet was prepared. As he approached, the loud voice of the Reverend Doctor Battleblast was heard, beseeching a blessing on the good things set before them, and on the distinguished friend of peace in whose honor they were assembled. The tables were arranged in a cleared space of the woods, shut in by the surrounding trees, except where a vista opened eastward, and afforded a distant view of the Great Stone Face. Over the general's chair, which was a relic from the home of Washington, there was an arch of verdant boughs, with the laurel profusely intermixed, and surmounted by his country's banner, beneath which he had won his victories. Our friend Ernest raised himself on his tip-toes, in hopes to get a glimpse of the celebrated guest; but there was a mighty crowd about the tables anxious to hear the toasts and speeches, and to catch any word that might fall from the general in reply; and a volunteer company, doing duty as a guard, pricked ruthlessly with their bayonets at any particularly quiet person among the throng. So Ernest, being of an unobtrusive character, was thrust quite into the background, where he could see no more of Old Blood-and-Thunder's physiognomy than if it had been still blazing on the battlefield. To console himself, he turned towards the Great Stone Face, which, like a faithful and long-remembered friend, looked back and smiled upon him through the vista of the forest. Meantime, however, he could overhear the remarks of various individuals, who were comparing the features of the hero with the face on the distant mountainside.

"'Tis the same face, to a hair!" cried one man, cutting a caper for joy.

"Wonderfully like, that's a fact!" responded another.

"Like! why, I call it Old Blood-and-Thunder himself, in a monstrous looking-glass!" cried a third. "And why not? He's the greatest man of this or any other age, beyond a doubt."

And then all three of the speakers gave a great shout, which communicated electricity to the crowd, and called forth a roar from a thousand voices, that went reverberating for miles among the mountains, until you might have supposed that the Great Stone Face had poured its thunder-breath into the cry. All these comments, and this vast enthusiasm, served the more to interest our friend; nor did he think of questioning that now, at length, the mountain-visage had found its human counterpart. It is true, Ernest had imagined that this long-looked-for personage would appear in the character of a man of peace, uttering wisdom, and doing good, and making people happy. But, taking an habitual breadth of view, with all his simplicity, he contended that Providence should choose its own method of blessing mankind, and could conceive that this great end might be effected even by a warrior and a bloody sword, should inscrutable wisdom see fit to order matters so.

"The general! the general!" was now the cry. "Hush! silence! Old Blood-and-Thunder's going to make a speech."

Even so; for, the cloth being removed, the general's health had been drunk amid shouts of applause, and he now stood upon his feet to thank the company. Ernest saw him. There he was, over the shoulders of the crowd, from the two glittering epaulets and embroidered collar upward, beneath the arch of green boughs with intertwined laurel, and the banner drooping as if to shade his brow! And there, too, visible in the same glance, through the vista of the forest, appeared the Great Stone Face! And was there, indeed, such a resemblance as the crowd had testified? Alas, Ernest could not recognize it! He beheld a war-worn and weather-beaten countenance, full of energy, and expressive of an iron will; but the gentle wisdom, the deep, broad, tender sympathies, were altogether wanting in Old Blood-and-Thunder's visage; and even if the Great Stone Face had assumed his look of stern command, the milder traits would still have tempered it.

"This is not the man of prophecy," sighed Ernest to himself, as he made his way out of the throng. "And must the world wait longer yet?"

The mists had congregated about the distant mountain-side, and there were seen the grand and awful features of the Great Stone Face, awful but benignant, as if a mighty angel were sitting among the hills, and enrobing himself in a cloud-vesture of gold and purple. As he looked, Ernest could hardly believe but that a smile beamed over the whole visage, with a radiance still brightening, although without motion of the lips. It was probably the effect of the western sunshine, melting through the thinly diffused vapors that had swept between him and the object that he gazed at. But—as it always did—the aspect of his marvellous friend made Ernest as hopeful as if he had never hoped in vain.

"Fear not, Ernest," said his heart, even as if the Great Face were whispering him, "fear not, Ernest; he will come."

More years sped swiftly and tranquilly away. Ernest still dwelt in his native valley, and was now a man of middle age. By imperceptible degrees, he had become known among the people. Now, as heretofore, he labored for his bread, and was the same simple-hearted man that he had always been. But he had thought and felt so much, he had given so many of the best hours of his life to unworldly hopes for some great good to mankind, that it seemed as though he had been talking with the angels, and had imbibed a portion of their wisdom unawares. It was visible in the calm and well-considered beneficence of his daily life, the quiet stream of which had made a wide green margin all along its course. Not a day passed by, that the world was not the better because this man, humble as he was, had lived. He never stepped aside from his own path, yet would always reach a blessing to his neighbor. Almost involuntarily, too, he had become a preacher. The pure and high simplicity of his thought, which, as one of its manifestations, took shape in the good deeds that dropped silently from his hand, flowed also forth in speech. He uttered truths that wrought upon and moulded the lives of those who heard him. His auditors, it may be, never suspected that Ernest, their own neighbor and familiar friend, was more than an ordinary man; least of all did Ernest himself suspect it; but, inevitably as the murmur of a rivulet, came thoughts out of his mouth that no other human lips had spoken.

When the people's minds had had a little time to cool, they were ready enough to acknowledge their mistake in imagining a similarity between General Blood-and-Thunder's truculent physiognomy and the benign visage on the mountain-side. But now, again, there were reports and many paragraphs in the newspapers, affirming that the likeness of the Great Stone Face had appeared upon the broad shoulders of a certain eminent statesman. He, like Mr. Gathergold and Old Blood-and-Thunder, was a native of the valley, but had left it in his early days, and taken up the trades of law and politics. Instead of the rich man's wealth and the warrior's sword, he had but a tongue, and it was mightier than both together. So wonderfully eloquent was he, that whatever he might choose to say, his auditors had no choice but to believe him; wrong looked like right, and right like wrong; for when it pleased him, he could make a kind of illuminated fog with his mere breath, and obscure the natural daylight with it. His tongue, indeed, was a magic instrument: sometimes it rumbled like the thunder; sometimes it warbled like the sweetest music. It was the blast of war—the song of peace; and it seemed to have a heart in it, when there was no such matter. In good truth, he was a wondrous man; and when his tongue had acquired him all other imaginable success,—when it had been heard in halls of state, and in the courts of princes and potentates,—after it had made him known all over the world, even as a voice crying from shore to shore,—it finally persuaded his countrymen to select him for the Presidency. Before this time,—indeed, as soon as he began to grow celebrated,—his admirers had found out the resemblance between him and the Great Stone Face; and so much were they struck by it, that throughout the country this distinguished gentleman was known by the name of Old Stony Phiz. The phrase was considered as giving a highly favorable aspect to his political prospects; for, as is likewise the case with the Popedom, nobody ever becomes President without taking a name other than his own.

While his friends were doing their best to make him President, Old Stony Phiz, as he was called, set out on a visit to the valley where he was born. Of course, he had no other object than to shake hands with his fellow-citizens, and neither thought nor cared about any effect which his progress through the country might have upon the election. Magnificent preparations were made to receive the illustrious statesman; a cavalcade of horsemen set forth to meet him at the boundary line of the state, and all the people left their business and gathered along the wayside to see him pass. Among these was Ernest. Though more than once disappointed, as we have seen, he had such a hopeful and confiding nature, that he was always ready to believe in whatever seemed beautiful and good. He kept his heart continually open, and thus was sure to catch the blessing from on high, when it should come. So now again, as buoyantly as ever, he went forth to behold the likeness of the Great Stone Face.

The cavalcade came prancing along the road, with a great clattering of hoofs and a mighty cloud of dust, which rose up so dense and high that the visage of the mountainside was completely hidden from Ernest's eyes. All the great men of the neighborhood were there on horseback; militia officers, in uniform; the member of Congress; the sheriff of the county; the editors of the newspapers; and many a farmer, too, had mounted his patient steed, with his Sunday coat upon his back. It really was a very brilliant spectacle, especially as there were numerous banners flaunting over the cavalcade, on some of which were gorgeous portraits of the illustrious statesman and the Great Stone Face, smiling familiarly at one another, like two brothers. If the pictures were to be trusted, the mutual resemblance, it must be confessed, was marvellous. We must not forget to mention that there was a band of music, which made the echoes of the mountains ring and reverberate with the loud triumph of its strains; so that airy and soul-thrilling melodies broke out among all the heights and hollows, as if every nook of his native valley had found a voice, to welcome the distinguished guest. But the grandest effect was when the far-off mountain precipice flung back the music; for then the Great Stone Face itself seemed to be swelling the triumphant chorus, in acknowledgment that, at length, the man of prophecy was come.

All this while the people were throwing up their hats and shouting, with enthusiasm so contagious that the heart of Ernest kindled up, and he likewise threw up his hat, and shouted, as loudly as the loudest, "Huzza for the great man! Huzza for Old Stony Phiz!" But as yet he had not seen him.

"Here he is, now!" cried those who stood near Ernest. "There! There! Look at Old Stony Phiz and then at the Old Man of the Mountain, and see if they are not as like as two twin-brothers!"

In the midst of all this gallant array, came an open barouche, drawn by four white horses; and in the barouche, with his massive head uncovered, sat the illustrious statesman, Old Stony Phiz himself.

"Confess it," said one of Ernest's neighbors to him, "the Great Stone Face has met its match at last!"

Now, it must be owned that, at his first glimpse of the countenance which was bowing and smiling from the barouche, Ernest did fancy that there was a resemblance between it and the old familiar face upon the mountainside. The brow, with its massive depth and loftiness, and all the other features, indeed, were boldly and strongly hewn, as if in emulation of a more than heroic, of a Titanic model. But the sublimity and stateliness, the grand expression of a divine sympathy, that illuminated the mountain visage, and etherealized its ponderous granite substance into spirit, might here be sought in vain. Something had been originally left out, or had departed. And therefore the marvellously gifted statesman had always a weary gloom in the deep caverns of his eyes, as of a child that has outgrown its playthings, or a man of mighty faculties and little aims, whose life, with all its high performances, was vague and empty, because no high purpose had endowed it with reality.

Still, Ernest's neighbor was thrusting his elbows into his side, and pressing him for an answer.

"Confess! confess! Is not he the very picture of your Old Man of the Mountain?"

"No!" said Ernest, bluntly, "I see little or no likeness."

"Then so much the worse for the Great Stone Face!" answered his neighbor; and again he set up a shout for Old Stony Phiz.

But Ernest turned away, melancholy, and almost despondent; for this was the saddest of his disappointments, to behold a man who might have fulfilled the prophecy, and had not willed to do so. Meantime, the cavalcade, the banners, the music, and the barouches swept past him, with the vociferous crowd in the rear, leaving the dust to settle down, and the Great Stone Face to be revealed again, with the grandeur that it had worn for untold centuries.

"Lo, here I am, Ernest!" the benign lips seemed to say. "I have waited longer than thou, and am not yet weary. Fear not; the man will come."

The years hurried onward, treading in their haste on one another's heels. And now they began to bring white hairs, and scatter them over the head of Ernest; they made reverend wrinkles across his forehead, and furrows in his cheeks. He was an aged man. But not in vain had he grown old; more than the white hairs on his head were the sage thoughts in his mind; his wrinkles and furrows were inscriptions that Time had graved, and in which he had written legends of wisdom that had been tested by the tenor of a life. And Ernest had ceased to be obscure. Unsought for, undesired, had come the fame which so many seek, and made him known in the great world, beyond the limits of the valley in which he had dwelt so quietly. College professors, and even the active men of cities, came from far to see and converse with Ernest; for the report had gone abroad that this simple husbandman had ideas unlike those of other men, not gained from books, but of a higher tone,—a tranquil and familiar majesty, as if he had been talking with the angels as his daily friends. Whether it were sage, statesman, or philanthropist, Ernest received these visitors with the gentle sincerity that had characterized him from boyhood, and spoke freely with them of whatever came uppermost, or lay deepest in his heart or their own. While they talked together, his face would kindle, unawares, and shine upon them, as with a mild evening light. Pensive with the fullness of such discourse, his guests took leave and went their way; and, passing up the valley, paused to look at the Great Stone Face, imagining that they had seen its likeness in a human countenance, but could not remember where.

While Ernest had been growing up and growing old, a bountiful Providence had granted a new poet to this earth. He, likewise, was a native of the valley, but had spent the greater part of his life at a distance from that romantic region, pouring out his sweet music amid the bustle and din of cities. Often, however, did the mountains which had been familiar to him in his childhood lift their snowy peaks into the clear atmosphere of his poetry. Neither was the Great Stone Face forgotten, for the poet had celebrated it in an ode, which was grand enough to have been uttered by its own majestic lips. This man of genius, we may say, had come down from heaven with wonderful endowments. If he sang of a mountain, the eyes of all mankind beheld a mightier grandeur reposing on its breast, or soaring to its summit, than had before been seen there. If his theme were a lovely lake, a celestial smile had now been thrown over it, to gleam forever on its surface. If it were the vast old sea, even the deep immensity of its dread bosom seemed to swell the higher, as if moved by the emotions of the song. Thus the world assumed another and a better aspect from the hour that the poet blessed it with his happy eyes. The Creator had bestowed him, as the last, best touch to his own handiwork. Creation was not finished till the poet came to interpret and so complete it.

The effect was no less high and beautiful, when his human brethren were the subject of his verse. The man or woman, sordid with the common dust of life, who crossed his daily path, and the little child who played in it, were glorified if he beheld them in his mood of poetic faith. He showed the golden links of the great chain that intertwined them with an angelic kindred; he brought out the hidden traits of a celestial birth that made them worthy of such kin. Some, indeed, there were, who thought to show the soundness of their judgment by affirming that all the beauty and dignity of the natural world existed only in the poet's fancy. Let such men speak for themselves, who undoubtedly appear to have been spawned forth by Nature with a contemptuous bitterness; she having plastered them up out of her refuse stuff, after all the swine were made. As respects all things else, the poet's ideal was the truest truth.

The songs of this poet found their way to Ernest. He read them, after his customary toil, seated on the bench before his cottage door, where, for such a length of time he had filled his repose with thought, by gazing at the Great Stone Face. And now, as he read stanzas that caused the soul to thrill within him, he lifted his eyes to the vast countenance beaming on him so benignantly.

"Oh, majestic friend," he murmured, addressing the Great Stone Face, "is not this man worthy to resemble thee?"

The Face seemed to smile, but answered not a word.

Now it happened that the poet, though he dwelt so far away, had not only heard of Ernest, but had meditated much upon his character, until he deemed nothing so desirable as to meet this man, whose untaught wisdom walked hand in hand with the noble simplicity of his life. One summer morning, therefore, he took passage by the railroad, and, in the decline of the afternoon, alighted from the cars at no great distance from Ernest's cottage. The great hotel, which had formerly been the palace of Mr. Gathergold, was close at hand, but the poet, with his carpet-bag on his arm, inquired at once where Ernest dwelt, and was resolved to be accepted as his guest.

Approaching the door, he there found the good old man, holding a volume in his hand, which alternately he read, and then, with a finger between the leaves, looked lovingly at the Great Stone Face.

"Good evening," said the poet. "Can you give a traveller a night's lodging?"

"Willingly," answered Ernest; and then he added, smiling, "Methinks I never saw the Great Stone Face look so hospitably at a stranger."

The poet sat down on the bench beside him, and he and

Ernest talked together. Often had the poet held intercourse with the wittiest and the wisest, but never before with a man like Ernest, whose thoughts and feelings gushed up with such a natural freedom, and who made great truths so familiar by his simple utterance of them. Angels, as had been so often said, seemed to have wrought with him at his labor in the fields; angels seemed to have sat with him by the fireside; and, dwelling with angels as friend with friends, he had imbibed the sublimity of their ideas, and imbued it with the sweet and lowly charm of household words. So thought the poet. And Ernest, on the other hand, was moved and agitated by the living images which the poet flung out of his mind, and which peopled all the air about the cottage door with shapes of beauty, both gay and pensive. The sympathies of these two men instructed them with a profounder sense than either could have attained alone. Their minds accorded into one strain, and made delightful music which neither of them could have claimed as all his own, nor distinguished his own share from the other's. They led one another, as it were, into a high pavilion of their thoughts, so remote, and hitherto so dim, that they had never entered it before, and so beautiful that they desired to be there always.

As Ernest listened to the poet, he imagined that the Great Stone Face was bending forward to listen too. He gazed earnestly into the poet's glowing eyes.

"Who are you, my strangely gifted guest?" he said.

The poet laid his finger on the volume that Ernest had been reading.

"You have read these poems," said he. "You know me, then,—for I wrote them."

Again, and still more earnestly than before, Ernest examined the poet's features; then turned towards the Great Stone Face; then back, with an uncertain aspect, to his guest. But his countenance fell; he shook his head, and sighed.

“Wherefore are you sad?” inquired the poet.

“Because,” replied Ernest, “all through life I have awaited the fulfilment of a prophecy; and, when I read these poems, I hoped that it might be fulfilled in you.”

“You hoped,” answered the poet, faintly smiling, “to find in me the likeness of the Great Stone Face. And you are disappointed, as formerly with Mr. Gathergold, and old Blood-and-Thunder, and Old Stony Phiz. Yes, Ernest, it is my doom. You must add my name to the illustrious three, and record another failure of your hopes. For—in shame and sadness do I speak it, Ernest—I am not worthy to be typified by yonder benign and majestic image.”

“And why?” asked Ernest. He pointed to the volume;—“Are not those thoughts divine?”

“They have a strain of the Divinity,” replied the poet. “You can hear in them the far-off echo of a heavenly song. But my life, dear Ernest, has not corresponded with my thought. I have had grand dreams, but they have been only dreams, because I have lived—and that, too, by my own choice—among poor and mean realities. Sometimes even—shall I dare to say it?—I lack faith in the grandeur, the beauty, and the goodness, which my own works are said to have made more evident in nature and in human life. Why, then, pure seeker of the good and true, shouldst thou hope to find me, in yonder image of the divine!”

The poet spoke sadly, and his eyes were dim with tears. So, likewise, were those of Ernest.

At the hour of sunset, as had long been his frequent custom, Ernest was to discourse to an assemblage of the neighboring inhabitants, in the open air. He and the poet, arm in arm, still talking together as they went along, proceeded to the spot. It was a small nook among the hills, with a gray precipice behind, the stern front of which was relieved by the pleasant foliage of many creeping plants, that made a tapestry for the naked rock, by hanging their festoons from all its rugged angles. At a small elevation above the ground, set in a rich framework of verdure, there appeared a niche, spacious enough to admit a human figure, with freedom for such gestures as spontaneously accompany earnest thought and genuine emotion. Into this natural pulpit Ernest ascended, and threw a look of familiar kindness around upon his audience. They stood, or sat, or reclined upon the grass, as seemed good to each, with the departing sunshine falling obliquely over them, and mingling its subdued cheerfulness with the solemnity of a grove of ancient trees, beneath and amid the boughs of which the golden rays were constrained to pass. In another direction was seen the Great Stone Face, with the same cheer, combined with the same solemnity, in its benignant aspect.

Ernest began to speak, giving the people of what was in his heart and mind. His words had power, because they accorded with his thoughts; and his thoughts had reality and depth, because they harmonized with the life which he had always lived. It was not mere breath that this preacher uttered; they were the words of life, because a life of good deeds and holy love was melted into them. Pearls, pure and rich, had been dissolved into this precious draught. The poet, as he listened, felt that the being and character of Ernest were a nobler strain of poetry than he had ever written. His eyes glistening with tears, he gazed reverentially at the venerable man, and said within himself that never was there an aspect so worthy of a prophet and a sage as that mild, sweet, thoughtful countenance, with the glory of white hair diffused about it. At a distance, but distinctly to be seen, high up in the golden light of the setting sun, appeared the Great Stone Face, with hoary mists around it, like the white hairs around the brow of Ernest. Its look of grand beneficence seemed to embrace the world.

At that moment, in sympathy with a thought which he was about to utter, the face of Ernest assumed a grandeur of expression, so imbued with benevolence, that the poet, by an irresistible impulse, threw his arms aloft, and shouted:—

"Behold! behold! Ernest is himself the likeness of the Great Stone Face!"

Then all the people looked, and saw that what the deep-sighted poet said was true. The prophecy was fulfilled. But Ernest, having finished what he had to say, took the poet's arm, and walked slowly homeward, still hoping that some wiser and better man than himself would by and by appear, bearing a resemblance to THE GREAT STONE FACE.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIE

1847

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers for ever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.

Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition, still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

Part the First

I

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of chestnut,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables projecting
Over the basement below protected and shaded the door-way.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the way-side,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,
Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.
Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the road-side,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard.

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs and the harrows;
There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his feathered seraglio,
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the selfsame
Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In each one
Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a staircase,
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent inmates
Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest devotion;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,

Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men;
For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness
Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hill-side bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters,
Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its fledglings;
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that was the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;
She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and abundance,
Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

II

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their honey
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes

Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-Saints!
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-yards,
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapors around him;
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and stillness.
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight descending
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the homestead.
Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,

Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the sea-side,
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,
When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their fetlocks,
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its hinges.

Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the marshes."
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fireside:—
"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!
Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe."
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued:—
"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean time
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."
Then made answer the farmer:—"Perhaps some friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England
By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and children."
"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said, warmly, the blacksmith,
Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he continued:—
"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.
Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,
Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.
Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all kinds;
Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of the mower."
Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer:—
"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our cornfields,
Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the ocean,
Than were our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.
Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night of the contract.
Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village
Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the glebe round about them,
Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelvemonth.
René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and ink-horn.
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our children?"
As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her lover's,
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had spoken,
And as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

III

Bent like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary public;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung
Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war had he languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.

He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children;
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,
"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand."
Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public:—
"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;
And what their errand may be, I know not better than others.
Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention
Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then molest us?"
"God's name!" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith;
"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore?
Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest!"

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public:—
"Man is unjust; but God is just; and finally justice
Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal."
This was the old man's favorite tale, and he loved to repeat it
When his neighbors complained that any injustice was done them.
"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.
Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance,
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.
But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman's palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,

Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was inwoven."
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pré;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date, and the age of the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;
And the notary, rising, and blessing the bride and the bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,
While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.
Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men
Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manoeuvre,

Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.
Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,
Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon rise
Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows.
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus passed the evening away. Anon the bell from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway
Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the household.
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows and lighted the room, till the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,
Waited her lover, and watched for the gleam of her lamp and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.
And as she gazed from the window she saw serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Hagar!

IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labor
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and the neighboring hamlets,

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young folk
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous meadows,
Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the highway.
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together.
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,
All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Stripped of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary seated;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers.
Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque*,
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons sonorous
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the head-stones
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and, marching proudly among them,
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and casement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the altar,
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.

"You are convened this day," he said, "by his Majesty's orders.
Clement and kind has he been; but how you have answered his kindness,
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch;
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all kinds
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!
Prisoners now I declare you; for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shatters his windows,
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the house-roofs,
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the speaker.
Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then rose
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the doorway.
Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations

Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the blacksmith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
455 Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and wildly he shouted:
"Down with the tyrants of England! we never have sworn them allegiance!
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and our harvests!"
More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the pavement.

460 In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people;
465 Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock strikes.
"What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has seized you?
Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and taught you,
Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!
470 Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and privations?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?
Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing upon you!
See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion!
Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father, forgive them!'
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate outbreak;
And they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from the altar.
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people responded,
Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and on all sides
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and children.
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right hand
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, descending,

Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor, and roofed each
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with wild-flowers;
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought from the dairy;
And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of the farmer.
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial meadows.
Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended,—
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and patience!
Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,
Cheering with looks and words the disconsolate hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering vapors
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.
Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows

Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,
"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper untasted,
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the whispering rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he created!
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of Heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till morning.

V

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-shore,

Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;
All day long the wains came laboring down from the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,
Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and way-worn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their voices,
Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions:—
"Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible fountain!
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience!"

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the way-side
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—
Calmly and sadly waited, until the procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered:
"Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"
Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father
Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his bosom.
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion

Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.
Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery seaweed.
Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the wagons,
Like to a Gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;
Sweet was the moist, still air with the odor of milk from their udders;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid.
Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his parish,
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.
Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been taken.
Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer him,
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.
"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden,

610 Raising his eyes full of tears, to the silent stars that above them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon
615 Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were
620 Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch, and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and on shipboard.
625 Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
"We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré!"
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle

Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud-bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the sea-shore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people:
"Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard."
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the seaside,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
Lo! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.
'T was the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;
And with the ebb of that tide the ships sailed out of the harbor,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

PART THE SECOND

I

Many a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,—
Exile without an end, and without an example in story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind from the northeast

Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas,—
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing, heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.
Fair was she and young; but, alas! before her extended,
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished;
As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine,
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended
Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and endeavor;
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and tombstones,
Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its bosom
He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.
Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward.
Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and known him,
But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.
"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said they; "O yes! we have seen him.
He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to the prairies;
Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters and trappers."
"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "O yes! we have seen him.
He is a *Voyageur* in the lowlands of Louisiana."
Then would they say: "Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?
Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal?
Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee
Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!
Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's tresses."
Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, "I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.
For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."
And thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,
Said, with a smile: "O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!
Talk not of wasted affection,—affection never was wasted;
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;
That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.
Patience! accomplish thy labor; accomplish thy work of affection!
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.
Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is made godlike,
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven!"
Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline labored and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered, "Despair not!"
Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the wanderer's footsteps;—
Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence;
But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the valley:

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water
Here and there in some open space, and at intervals only;
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur;
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an outlet.

II

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.
It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common misfortune;
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father Felician.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the current,

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-cots.
They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual summer,
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and citron,
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.
They, too, swerved from their course; and, entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,
Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress
Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.
Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons
Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks in a ruin.
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around them;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sadness,—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that faintly
Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the music.
Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;
But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;
And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.

Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen rowed through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers.
And through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,
Far off, indistinct, as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from those shades; and before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grape-vine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,

Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows,
And undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers;
Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician!

Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?"
Then, with a blush, she added: "Alas for my credulous fancy!
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."
But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered:—
"Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning.
Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.
Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the southward,
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her bridegroom,
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-trees;
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

And with these words of cheer they arose and continued their journey.
Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape;
Twinkling vapors arose; and sky and water and forest

Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.
Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to madness
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.
Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with emotion,
Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the green Opelousas,
And through the amber air, above the crest of the woodland,
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring dwelling;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

III

Near to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks, from whose branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-tide,
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.
Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals.
Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.
In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a pathway
Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless prairie,
Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grape-vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prairie,

Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deer-skin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine that were grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the Blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful.

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said: "If you came by the Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent:—
"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face on his shoulder,
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.
Then the good Basil said,— and his voice grew blithe as he said it,—
"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.
Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.
Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,
He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,
Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him
Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.
Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,
Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.
Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning
We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,
Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.
Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on Olympus,
Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.
"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian minstrel!"
As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and straightway
Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old man
Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil, enraptured,
Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,
Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant blacksmith,
All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanor;
Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who would take them;
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do likewise.
Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the airy veranda,
Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil
Waited his late return; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.
All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape with silver,
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.
Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco,
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they listened:—
"Welcome once more, my friends, who so long have been friendless and homeless,
Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one!
Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers;
Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer.
Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a keel through the water.
All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom; and grass grows
More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the prairies;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into houses.
After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away from your homesteads,

Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your farms and your cattle."
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his nostrils,
And his huge, brawny hand came thundering down on the table,
So that the guests all started; and Father Felician, astounded,
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer:—
"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever!
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell!"
Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approaching
Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy veranda.
It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the Herdsman.
Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors:
Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were as strangers,
Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.
But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,
All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the maddening
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and the herdsman
Sat, conversing together of past and present and future;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness 1025
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the garden.
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the river
Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of the moonlight,
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious spirit. 1030
Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the garden
Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and confessions
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and night-dews,
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical moonlight 1035
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,
As, through the garden gate, and beneath the brown shade of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies
Gleamed and floated away in mingled and infinite numbers. 1040
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and worship,

Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, "Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fireflies,
Wandered alone, and she cried: "O Gabriel! O my beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach me?
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands around me!
Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy slumbers!
When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about thee?"
Loud and sudden and near the notes of a whippoorwill sounded
Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighboring thickets,
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into silence.
"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of darkness;
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, "To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers of the garden
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his tresses
With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of crystal.

"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy threshold;
"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting and famine,
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom was coming."
"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil descended
Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were waiting.
Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine, and gladness,
Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding before them,
Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.
Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river,
Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and uncertain
Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and desolate country;
Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,
Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous landlord,
That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

IV

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's wagon,

Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Mountains,
Through the Sweetwater Valley precipitate leaps the Nebraska;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
Over them wander the buffalo herds, and the elk and the roebuck;
Over them wander the wolves, and herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage marauders;
Here and there rise groves from the margin of swift-running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Creeps down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side,

And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them. 1105

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his camp-fire 1110
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they found only embers and ashes.
And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished before them. 1115

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently entered
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches, 1120
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-Bois, had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted among them

On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped up in their blankets,
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian accent,
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and reverses.
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been disappointed.
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's compassion,
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near her,
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had ended
Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious horror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of the Mowis;
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird incantation,

Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the maiden,
Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest,
Never more to return, nor was seen again by her people.
Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the enchantress.
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendor
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the woodland.
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a secret,
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the swallow.
It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a moment
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom.
With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed; and the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along: "On the western slope of these mountains

Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as they hear him."
Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered:
"Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!"
Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the mountains,
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.
Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grapevines,
Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.
This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches
Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.
Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.
But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade them
Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the forest,
And with words of kindness conducted them into his wigwam.
There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the maize-ear
Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the teacher.
Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity answered:—
"Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes,
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his journey!"
Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent of kindness;
But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the snow-flakes
Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.

"Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest; "but in autumn,
When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."
Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,
"Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted."
So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,
Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions,
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing
Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving above her,
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming
Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the corn-field.
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover.
"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and thy prayer will be answered!
Look at this delicate plant that lifts its head from the meadow,
See how its leaves all point to the north, as true as the magnet;
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has suspended
Here on its fragile stalk, to direct the traveller's journey
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,
But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.
Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter, yet Gabriel came not;

Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and blue-bird
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.
But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted
Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.
Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,
Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.
And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St. Lawrence,
Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission.
When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,
She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin!

Thus did the long, sad years glide on, and in seasons and places
Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden;—
Now in the tents of grace of the meek Moravian Missions,
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the shadow.
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er her forehead,
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

V

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,

Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they molested.

There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer a stranger;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavor,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and her footsteps.
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him.

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.
Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but transfigured;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not absent;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.
Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs
Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,

Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of existence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the oppressor;
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger;—
Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and woodlands;—
Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway and wicket
Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem to echo
Softly the words of the Lord: "The poor ye always have with you."
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy. The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden;
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit:
Something within her said, "At length thy trials are ended";
And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,
Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the road-side.
Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her presence
Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it for ever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-time;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped from her fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his temples;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, for ever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank thee!"

Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever,
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labors,
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile
Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy;

Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A PSALM OF LIFE

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

Ἀσπασίη, τρίλλιστος

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,

That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

MAIDENHOOD

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

EXCELSIOR

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath,
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,
Excelsior!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!"
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior!

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night;
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

It was the schooner Hesperus,
  That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,
  To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
  Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
  That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
  His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
  The smoke now west, now south.

Then up and spake an old sailòr,
  Had sailed the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
  For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
  And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
  And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
  A gale from the northeast;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
  And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
  The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
  Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be?"
"'T is a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"—
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,

Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between,
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

SONNET

Divina Commedia

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
  A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
  Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
  Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
  Far off the noises of the world retreat;
  The loud vociferations of the street
  Become an undistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
  And leave my burden at this minster gate,
  Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
  To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
  While the eternal ages watch and wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

THE BIRDS OF KILLINGWORTH

It was the season when through all the land
The merle and mavis build, and building sing
Those lovely lyrics, written by His hand,
Whom Saxon Cædmon calls the Blithe-heart King;
When on the boughs the purple buds expand,
The banners of the vanguard of the Spring,
And rivulets, rejoicing, rush and leap,
And wave their fluttering signals from the steep.

The robin and the bluebird, piping loud,
Filled all the blossoming orchards with their glee;
The sparrows chirped as if they still were proud
Their race in Holy Writ should mentioned be;
And hungry crows, assembled in a crowd,
Clamored their piteous prayer incessantly,
Knowing who hears the raven's cry, and said:
"Give us, O Lord, this day, our daily bread!"

Across the Sound the birds of passage sailed,
Speaking some unknown language strange and sweet
Of tropic isle remote, and passing hailed
The village with the cheers of all their fleet;
Or quarrelling together, laughed and railed
Like foreign sailors, landed in the street
Of seaport town, and with outlandish noise
Of oaths and gibberish frightening girls and boys.

Thus came the jocund Spring in Killingworth,
In fabulous days, some hundred years ago;
And thrifty farmers, as they tilled the earth,
Heard with alarm the cawing of the crow,
That mingled with the universal mirth,
Cassandra-like, prognosticating woe;
They shook their heads, and doomed with dreadful words
To swift destruction the whole race of birds.

And a town-meeting was convened straightway
To set a price upon the guilty heads
Of these marauders, who, in lieu of pay,
Levied black-mail upon the garden-beds
And cornfields, and beheld without dismay
The awful scarecrow, with his fluttering shreds;
The skeleton that waited at their feast,
Whereby their sinful pleasure was increased.

Then from his house, a temple painted white,
With fluted columns, and a roof of red,
The Squire came forth, august and splendid sight!
Slowly descending, with majestic tread,
Three flights of steps, nor looking left nor right,
Down the long street he walked, as one who said,
"A town that boasts inhabitants like me
Can have no lack of good society!"

The Parson, too, appeared, a man austere,
The instinct of whose nature was to kill;
The wrath of God he preached from year to year,
And read with fervor, Edwards on the Will
His favorite pastime was to slay the deer
In Summer on some Adirondac hill;
E'en now, while walking down the rural lane,
He lopped the wayside lilies with his cane.

From the Academy, whose belfry crowned
The hill of Science with its vane of brass,
Came the Preceptor, gazing idly round,
Now at the clouds, and now at the green grass,
And all absorbed in reveries profound
Of fair Almira in the upper class,
Who was, as in a sonnet he had said,
As pure as water, and as good as bread.

And next the Deacon issued from his door,
In his voluminous neck-cloth, white as snow;
A suit of sable bombazine he wore;
His form was ponderous, and his step was slow;
There never was so wise a man before;
He seemed the incarnate "Well, I told you so!"
And to perpetuate his great renown
There was a street named after him in town.

These came together in the new town-hall,
With sundry farmers from the region round.
The Squire presided, dignified and tall,
His air impressive and his reasoning sound.
Ill fared it with the birds, both great and small;
Hardly a friend in all that crowd they found,
But enemies enough, who every one
Charged them with all the crimes beneath the sun.

When they had ended, from his place apart
Rose the Preceptor, to redress the wrong,
And, trembling like a steed before the start,
Looked round bewildered on the expectant throng;
Then thought of fair Almira, and took heart
To speak out what was in him, clear and strong,
Alike regardless of their smile or frown,
And quite determined not to be laughed down:

"Plato, anticipating the Reviewers,
From his Republic banished without pity
The Poets. In this little town of yours,
You put to death, by means of a Committee,
The ballad-singers and the troubadours,
The street-musicians of the heavenly city,
The birds, who make sweet music for us all
In our dark hours, as David did for Saul.

"The thrush that carols at the dawn of day
From the green steeples of the piny wood;
The oriole in the elm; the noisy jay,
Jargoning like a foreigner at his food;
The bluebird balanced on some topmost spray,
Flooding with melody the neighborhood;
Linnet and meadow-lark, and all the throng
That dwell in nests, and have the gift of song;

"You slay them all! And wherefore? For the gain
Of a scant handful more or less of wheat,
Or rye, or barley, or some other grain,
Scratched up at random by industrious feet,
Searching for worm or weevil after rain!
Or a few cherries, that are not so sweet
As are the songs the uninvited guests
Sing at their feast with comfortable breasts.

"Do you ne'er think what wondrous beings these?
Do you ne'er think who made them, and who taught
The dialect they speak, where melodies
Alone are the interpreters of thought?
Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Sweeter than instrument of man e'er caught!
Whose habitations in the tree-tops even
Are halfway houses on the road to heaven!

"Think, every morning when the sun peeps through
The dim, leaf-latticed windows of the grove,
How jubilant the happy birds renew
Their old, melodious madrigals of love!
And when you think of this, remember too
'T is always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

"Think of your woods and orchards without birds!
Of empty nests that cling to boughs and beams
As in an idiot's brain remembered words
Hang empty 'mid the cobwebs of his dreams!
Will bleat of flocks or bellowing of herds
Make up for the lost music, when your teams
Drag home the stingy harvest, and no more
The feathered gleaners follow to your door?

"What! would you rather see the incessant stir
Of insects in the windrows of the hay,
And hear the locust and the grasshopper
Their melancholy hurdy-gurdies play?
Is this more pleasant to you than the whir
Of meadow-lark, and her sweet roundelay,
Or twitter of little fieldfares, as you take
Your nooning in the shade of bush and brake?

"You call them thieves and pillagers; but know,
They are the wingèd wardens of your farms,
Who from the cornfields drive the insidious foe,
And from your harvests keep a hundred harms;
Even the blackest of them all, the crow,
Renders good service as your man-at-arms,
Crushing the beetle in his coat of mail,
And crying havoc on the slug and snail.

"How can I teach your children gentleness,
And mercy to the weak, and reverence
For Life, which, in its weakness or excess,
Is still a gleam of God's omnipotence,
Or Death, which, seeming darkness, is no less
The selfsame light, although averted hence,
When by your laws, your actions, and your speech,
You contradict the very things I teach?"

With this he closed; and through the audience went
  A murmur, like the rustle of dead leaves;
The farmers laughed and nodded, and some bent
  Their yellow heads together like their sheaves;
Men have no faith in fine-spun sentiment
  Who put their trust in bullocks and in beeves.
The birds were doomed; and, as the record shows,
A bounty offered for the heads of crows.

There was another audience out of reach,
  Who had no voice nor vote in making laws,
But in the papers read his little speech,
  And crowned his modest temples with applause;
They made him conscious, each one more than each,
  He still was victor, vanquished in their cause.
Sweetest of all the applause he won from thee,
O fair Almira at the Academy!

And so the dreadful massacre began;
  O'er fields and orchards, and o'er woodland crests,
The ceaseless fusillade of terror ran.
  Dead fell the birds, with blood-stains on their breasts,
Or wounded crept away from sight of man,
  While the young died of famine in their nests;
A slaughter to be told in groans, not words,
The very St. Bartholomew of Birds!

The Summer came, and all the birds were dead;
  The days were like hot coals; the very ground
Was burned to ashes; in the orchards fed
  Myriads of caterpillars, and around
The cultivated fields and garden beds
  Hosts of devouring insects crawled, and found
No foe to check their march, till they had made
The land a desert without leaf or shade.

Devoured by worms, like Herod, was the town,
Because, like Herod, it had ruthlessly
Slaughtered the Innocents. From the trees spun down
The canker-worms upon the passers-by,
Upon each woman's bonnet, shawl, and gown,
Who shook them off with just a little cry;
They were the terror of each favorite walk,
The endless theme of all the village talk.

The farmers grew impatient, but a few
Confessed their error, and would not complain,
For after all, the best thing one can do
When it is raining, is to let it rain.
Then they repealed the law, although they knew
It would not call the dead to life again;
As school-boys, finding their mistake too late,
Draw a wet sponge across the accusing slate.

That year in Killingworth the Autumn came
Without the light of his majestic look,
The wonder of the falling tongues of flame,
The illumined pages of his Doom's-Day book.
A few lost leaves blushed crimson with their shame,
And drowned themselves despairing in the brook,
While the wild wind went moaning everywhere,
Lamenting the dead children of the air!

But the next Spring a stranger sight was seen,
A sight that never yet by bard was sung,
As great a wonder as it would have been
If some dumb animal had found a tongue!
A wagon, overarched with evergreen,
Upon whose boughs were wicker cages hung,
All full of singing-birds, came down the street,
Filling the air with music wild and sweet.

From all the country round these birds were brought,
  By order of the town, with anxious quest,
And, loosened from their wicker prisons, sought
  In woods and fields the places they loved best,
Singing loud canticles, which many thought
  Were satires to the authorities addressed,
While others, listening in green lanes, averred
Such lovely music never had been heard!

But blither still and louder carolled they
  Upon the morrow, for they seemed to know
It was the fair Almira's wedding-day,
  And everywhere, around, above, below,
When the Preceptor bore his bride away,
  Their songs burst forth in joyous overflow,
And a new heaven bent over a new earth
Amid the sunny farms of Killingworth.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

SNOW-BOUND

A WINTER IDYL

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common VVood fire: and as the celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of VVood doth the same."—Cor. Agrippa, *Occult Philosophy*, Book I, chap. v.

> "Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
> Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
> Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
> Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
> And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
> The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
> Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
> Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
> In a tumultuous privacy of storm."
>
> Emerson

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
  That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
  Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told.
The wind blew east: we heard the roar

Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows;
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows;
While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent.

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow:
And ere the early bed-time came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake, and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,

On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden wall, or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy?)
Our buskins on our feet we drew;
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,
We cut the solid whiteness through.
And, where the drift was deepest, made
A tunnel walled and overlaid
With dazzling crystal: we had read
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,
And to our own his name we gave,
With many a wish the luck were ours
To test his lamp's supernal powers.
We reached the barn with merry din,
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,

And grave with wonder gazed about;
The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led;
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
And mild reproach of hunger looked;
The hornèd patriarch of the sheep,
Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;
Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone,
No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicèd elements,
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the glass the unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.
We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose liquid lip
Had been to us companionship,
And, in our lonely life, had grown
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,

The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled, with care, our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back,—
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,
The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
Whispered the old rhyme: "*Under the tree,*
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the sombre green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
Against the whiteness at their back.
For such a world and such a night

Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed.
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—

The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard-trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor!
Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust,
(Since He who knows our need is just,)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
"The Chief of Gambia's golden shore."
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a trumpet called, I 've heard
Dame Mercy Warren's rousing word:

"Does not the voice of reason cry,
  Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly,
  Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"
Our father rode again his ride
On Memphremagog's wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. François' hemlock-trees;
Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;
Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led
Where Salisbury's level marshes spread
  Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
  The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,
  And round the rocky Isles of Shoals
  The hake-broil on the drift-wood coals;
The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay,
Adrift along the winding shores,
When favoring breezes deigned to blow
The square sail of the gundalow,
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cochecho town,
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
 So rich and picturesque and free,
 (The common unrhymed poetry
Of simple life and country ways,)
The story of her early days,—
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
We stole with her a frightened look
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,
The loon's weird laughter far away.
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down.
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild-geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.

Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave
From painful Sewell's ancient tome,
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint,—
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!—

Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
His portly presence mad for food,
With dark hints muttered under breath
Of casting lots for life or death,
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
To be himself the sacrifice.
Then, suddenly, as if to save
The good man from his living grave,
A ripple on the water grew,
A school of porpoise flashed in view.
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content:
These fishes in my stead are sent
By Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
But rich in lore of fields and brooks,
The ancient teachers never dumb
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,
By many an occult hint and sign,
Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
Like Apollonius of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes, who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
A simple, guileless, childlike man,
Content to live where life began;

Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
Whereof his fondly partial pride
The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White of Selborne's loving view,—
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,
Forgotten was the outside cold,
The bitter wind unheeded blew,
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river-brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay,
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
And from the shagbark overhead
The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear,—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome whereso'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home,—
Called up her girlhood memories,

The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dries so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,[1]
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee,—rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
How many a poor one's blessing went
With thee beneath the low green tent
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
Against the household bosom lean,

Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.
O, looking from some heavenly hill,
Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago:—
The chill weight of the winter snow
For months upon her grave has lain;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon

Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school
Held at the fire his favored place,
Its warm glow lit a laughing face
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
The uncertain prophecy of beard.
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.
Born the wild Northern hills among,
From whence his yeoman father wrung
By patient toil subsistence scant,
Not competence and yet not want,
He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way;
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
To peddle wares from town to town;
Or through the long vacation's reach
In lonely lowland districts teach,
Where all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round,
The moonlit skater's keen delight,
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
The rustic party, with its rough
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
And whirling-plate, and forfeits paid,
His winter task a pastime made.

Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame's winding-yarn,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Araxes took
The guise of any grist-mill brook,
And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed;
  But at his desk he had the look
And air of one who wisely schemed,
  And hostage from the future took
  In trainèd thought and lore of book.
Large-brained, clear-eyed,—of such as he
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
Who, following in War's bloody trail,
Shall every lingering wrong assail;
All chains from limb and spirit strike,
Uplift the black and white alike;
Scatter before their swift advance
The darkness and the ignorance,
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
Made murder pastime, and the hell
Of prison-torture possible;
The cruel lie of caste refute,
Old forms recast, and substitute
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
For blind routine, wise-handed skill

A school-house plant on every hill,
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
The quick wires of intelligence;
Till North and South together brought
Shall own the same electric thought,
In peace a common flag salute,
And, side by side in labor's free
And unresentful rivalry,
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest that winter night
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
The honeyed music of her tongue
And words of meekness scarcely told
A nature passionate and bold,
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,
Its milder features dwarfed beside
Her unbent will's majestic pride.
She sat among us, at the best,
A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,
Rebuking with her cultured phrase
Our homeliness of words and ways.
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace
  Swayed the lithe limbs and drooped the lash,
  Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;
  And under low brows, black with night,
  Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face
Presaging ill to him whom Fate
Condemned to share her love or hate.
A woman tropical, intense
In thought and act, in soul and sense,
She blended in a like degree
The vixen and the devotee,
Revealing with each freak or feint

The temper of Petruchio's Kate,
The raptures of Siena's saint.
Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
Had facile power to form a fist;
The warm, dark languish of her eyes
Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
Brows saintly calm and lips devout
Knew every change of scowl and pout;
And the sweet voice had notes more high
And shrill for social battle-cry.

Since then what old cathedral town
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
What convent-gate has held its lock
Against the challenge of her knock!
Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thoroughfares,
Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,
Or startling on her desert throne
The crazy Queen of Lebanon
With claims fantastic as her own,
Her tireless feet have held their way;
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
She watches under Eastern skies,
With hope each day renewed and fresh,
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!

Where'er her troubled path may be,
The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
The outward wayward life we see,
The hidden springs we may not know.
Nor is it given us to discern
What threads the fatal sisters spun,
Through what ancestral years has run

The sorrow with the woman born,
What forged her cruel chain of moods,
What set her feet in solitudes,
And held the love within her mute,
What mingled madness in the blood,
A life-long discord and annoy,
Water of tears with oil of joy,
And hid within the folded bud
Perversities of flower and fruit.
It is not ours to separate
The tangled skein of will and fate,
To show what metes and bounds should stand
Upon the soul's debatable land,
And between choice and Providence
Divide the circle of events;
But He who knows our frame is just,
Merciful, and compassionate,
And full of sweet assurances
And hope for all the language is,
That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely-warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray
And laid it tenderly away,
Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brand with ashes over.
And while, with care, our mother laid
The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express

Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us, through the unplastered wall,
Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall,
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new;
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
Till in the summer-land of dreams
They softened to the sound of streams,
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
Of merry voices high and clear;
And saw the teamsters drawing near
To break the drifted highways out.
Down the long hillside treading slow
We saw the half-buried oxen go,
Shaking the snow from heads uptost,
Their straining nostrils white with frost.
Before our door the straggling train
Drew up, an added team to gain.

The elders threshed their hands a-cold,
Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes
From lip to lip; the younger folks
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
Then toiled again the cavalcade
O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
And woodland paths that wound between
Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.
From every barn a team afoot,
At every house a new recruit,
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
Haply the watchful young men saw
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
And curious eyes of merry girls,
Lifting their hands in mock defence
Against the snow-balls' compliments,
And reading in each missive tost
The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
And, following where the teamsters led,
The wise old Doctor went his round,
Just pausing at our door to say,
In the brief autocratic way
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
Was free to urge her claim on all,
That some poor neighbor sick abed
At night our mother's aid would need.
For, one in generous thought and deed,
What mattered in the sufferer's sight
The Quaker matron's inward light,
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?
All hearts confess the saints elect
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,
And melt not in an acid sect
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed
Since the great world was heard from last.
The Almanac we studied o'er,
Read and reread our little store,
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
One harmless novel, mostly hid
From younger eyes, a book forbid,
And poetry, (or good or bad,
A single book was all we had,)
Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews.
At last the floundering carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Lo! broadening outward as we read,
To warmer zones the horizon spread;
In panoramic length unrolled
We saw the marvels that it told.
Before us passed the painted Creeks,
And daft McGregor on his raids
In Costa Rica's everglades.
And up Taygetos winding slow
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
A Turk's head at each saddle-bow!
Welcome to us its week-old news,
Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding bell and dirge of death:
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
The latest culprit sent to jail;
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
And traffic calling loud for gain.
We felt the stir of hall and street,

The pulse of life that round us beat;
The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow;
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray
And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest old and vast,
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
I hear again the voice that bids
The dreamer leave his dream midway
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
Dreaming in throngful city ways

Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
And dear and early friends—the few
Who yet remain—shall pause to view
These Flemish pictures of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

John Greenleaf Whittier

ICHABOD!

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn,
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Revile him not,—the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

O, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
  A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
  From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
  Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
  Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
  From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
  In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
  Save power remains,—
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
  Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
  The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
  The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
  To his dead fame;
Walk backward with averted gaze
  And hide the shame!

John Greenleaf Whittier

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,
Witch astride of a human back,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
  Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads sang:
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!— He sailed away
From a leaking ship, in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the skies so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting, far and near:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him!—why should we?"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

John Greenleaf Whittier

IN SCHOOL-DAYS

Still sits the school-house by the road,
  A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
  And blackberry vines are running.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
  Deep scarred by raps official;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
  The jack-knife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescos on its wall;
  Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
  Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun
  Shone over it at setting;
Lit up its western window-panes,
  And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
  And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed
  When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy
  Her childish favor singled;
His cap pulled low upon a face
  Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow
  To right and left, he lingered;—
As restlessly her tiny hands
  The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice,
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:
I hate to go above you,
Because,"—the brown eyes lower fell,—
"Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man
That sweet child-face is showing.
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her,—because they love him.

John Greenleaf Whittier

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1801-1894)

OLD IRONSIDES

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
  Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
  That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
  And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
  Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
  Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
  And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
  Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
  The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk
  Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
  And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
  Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
  The lightning and the gale!

Oliver Wendell Holmes

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS

I wrote some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb.

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added, (as a trifling jest,)
"There 'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next; the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

THE LAST LEAF

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said,—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago,—

That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,—
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE

IV

. . . .—My friend, the Professor, whom I have mentioned to you once or twice, told me yesterday that somebody had been abusing him in some of the journals of his calling. I told him that I did n't doubt he deserved it; that I hoped he did deserve a little abuse occasionally, and would for a number of years to come; that nobody could do anything to make his neighbors wiser or better without being liable to abuse for it; especially that people hated to have their little mistakes made fun of, and perhaps he had been doing something of the kind.—The Professor smiled.—Now, said I, hear what I am going to say. It will not take many years to bring you to the period of life when men, at least the majority of writing and talking men, do nothing but praise. Men, like peaches and pears, grow sweet a little while before they begin to decay. I don't know what it is,—whether a spontaneous change, mental or bodily, or whether it is thorough experience of the thanklessness of critical honesty, —but it is a fact, that most writers, except sour and unsuccessful ones, get tired of finding fault at about the time when they are beginning to grow old. As a general thing, I would not give a great deal for the fair words of a critic, if he is himself an author, over fifty years of age. At thirty we are all trying to cut our names in big letters upon the walls of this tenement of life; twenty years later we have carved it, or shut up our jack-knives. Then we are ready to help others, and care less to hinder any, because nobody's elbows are in our way. So I am glad you have a little life left; you will be saccharine enough in a few years.

—Some of the softening effects of advancing age have struck me very much in what I have heard or seen here and elsewhere. I just now spoke of the sweetening process that authors undergo. Do you know that in the gradual passage from maturity to helplessness the harshest characters sometimes have a period in which they are gentle and placid as young children? I have heard it said, but I cannot be sponsor for its truth, that the famous chieftain, Lochiel, was rocked in a cradle like a baby, in his old age. An old man, whose studies had been of the severest scholastic kind, used to love to hear little nursery-stories read over and over to him. One who saw the Duke of Wellington in his last years describes him as very gentle in his aspect and demeanor. I remember a person of singularly stern and lofty bearing who became remarkably gracious and easy in all his ways in the later period of his life.

And that leads me to say that men often remind me of pears in their way of coming to maturity. Some are ripe at twenty, like human Jargonelles, and must be made the most of, for their day is soon over. Some come into their perfect condition late, like the autumn kinds, and they last better than the summer fruit. And some, that, like the Winter-Nelis, have been hard and uninviting until all the rest have had their season, get their glow and perfume long after the frost and snow have done their worst with the orchards. Beware of rash criticisms; the rough and stringent fruit you condemn may be an autumn or a winter pear, and that which you picked up beneath the same bough in August may have been only its worm-eaten windfalls. Milton was a Saint-Germain with a graft of the roseate Early-Catherine. Rich, juicy, lively, fragrant, russet skinned old Chaucer was an Easter-Beurrè; the buds of a new summer were swelling when he ripened.

—There is no power I envy so much—said the divinity-student—as that of seeing analogies and making comparisons. I don't understand how it is that some minds are continually coupling thoughts or objects that seem not in the least related to each other, until all at once they are put in a certain light, and you wonder that you did not always see that they were as like as a pair of twins. It appears to me a sort of a miraculous gift.

[He is rather a nice young man, and I think has an appreciation of the higher mental qualities remarkable for one of his years and training. I try his head occasionally as housewives try eggs,—give it an intellectual shake and hold it up to the light, so to speak, to see if it has life in it, actual or potential, or only contains lifeless albumen.]

You call it *miraculous*,—I replied,—tossing the expression with my facial eminence, a little smartly, I fear.—Two men are walking by the polyphlœsbœan ocean, one of them having a small tin cup with which he can scoop up a gill of sea-water when he will, and the other nothing but his hands, which will hardly hold water at all,—and you call the tin cup a miraculous possession! It is the ocean that is the miracle, my infant apostle! Nothing is clearer than that all things are in all things, and that just according to the intensity and extension of our mental being we shall see the many in the one and the one in the many. Did Sir Isaac think what he was saying when he made *his* speech about the ocean,—the child and the pebbles, you know? Did he mean to speak slightingly of a pebble? Of a spherical solid which stood sentinel over its compartment of space before the stone that became the pyramids had grown solid, and has watched it until now! A body which knows all the currents of force that traverse the globe; which holds by invisible threads to the ring of Saturn and the belt of Orion! A body from the contemplation of which an archangel could infer the entire inorganic universe as the simplest of corollaries! A throne of the all-pervading Deity who has guided its every atom since the rosary of heaven was strung with beaded stars!

So,—to return to *our* walk by the ocean,—if all that poetry has dreamed, all that insanity has raved, all that maddening narcotics have driven through the brains of men, or smothered passion nursed in the fancies of women,—if the dreams of colleges and convents and boarding-schools,—if every human feeling that sighs, or smiles, or curses, or shrieks, or groans, should bring all their innumerable images, such as come with every hurried heart-beat,—the epic which held them all, though its letters filled the zodiac, would be but a cupful from the infinite ocean of similitudes and analogies that rolls through the universe.

[The divinity-student honored himself by the way in which he received this. He did not swallow it at once, neither did he reject it; but he took it as a pickerel takes the bait, and carried it off with him to his hole (in the fourth story) to deal with at his leisure.] . . . .

I know well enough that there are some of you who had a great deal rather see me stand on my head than use it for any purpose of thought. Does not my friend, the Professor, receive at least two letters a week, requesting him to . . . .,—on the strength of some youthful antic of his, which, no doubt, authorizes the intelligent constituency of autograph-hunters to address him as a harlequin?

—Well, I can't be savage with you for wanting to laugh, and I like to make you laugh, well enough, when I can. But then observe this: if the sense of the ridiculous is one side of an impressible nature, it is very well; but if that is all there is in a man, he had better have been an ape at once, and so have stood at the head of his profession. Laughter and tears are meant to turn the wheels of the same machinery of sensibility; one is wind-power, and the other water-power; that is all. I have often heard the Professor talk about hysterics as being Nature's cleverest illustration of the reciprocal convertibility of the two states of which these acts are the manifestations. But you may see it every day in children; and if you want to choke with stifled tears at sight of the transition, as it shows itself in older years, go and see Mr. Blake play *Jesse Rural*.

It is a very dangerous thing for a literary man to indulge his love for the ridiculous. People laugh *with* him just so long as he amuses them; but if he attempts to be serious, they must still have their laugh, and so they laugh *at* him. There is in addition, however, a deeper reason for this than would at first appear. Do you know that you feel a little superior to every man who makes you laugh, whether by making faces or verses? Are you aware that you have a pleasant sense of patronizing him, when you condescend so far as to let him turn somersets, literal or literary, for your royal delight? Now if a man can only be allowed to stand on a daïs, or raised platform, and look down on his neighbor who is exerting his talent for him, oh, it is all right!—first-rate performance!—and all the rest of the fine phrases. But if all at once the performer asks the gentleman to come upon the floor, and, stepping upon the platform, begins to talk down at him,—ah, that was n't in the programme!

I have never forgotten what happened when Sydney Smith—who, as everybody knows, was an exceedingly sensible man, and a gentleman, every inch of him—ventured to preach a sermon on the Duties of Royalty. The "Quarterly," "so savage and tartarly," came down upon him in the most contemptuous style, as "a joker of jokes," a "diner-out of the first water," in one of his own phrases; sneering at him, insulting him, as nothing but a toady of a court, sneaking behind the anonymous, would ever have been mean enough to do to a man of his position and genius, or to any decent person even.—If I were giving advice to a young fellow of talent, with two or three facets to his mind, I would tell him by all means to keep his wit in the background until after he had made a reputation by his more solid qualities. And so to an actor: *Hamlet* first, and *Bob Logic* afterwards, if you like; but don't think, as they say poor Liston used to, that people will be ready to allow that you can do anything great with *Macbeth's* dagger after flourishing about with *Paul Pry's* umbrella. Do you know, too, that the majority of men look upon all who challenge their attention,—for a while, at least,—as beggars, and nuisances? They always try to get off as cheaply as they can; and the cheapest of all things they can give a literary man—pardon the forlorn pleasantry!—is the *funny*-bone. That is all very well so far as it goes, but satisfies no man, and makes a good many angry, as I told you on a former occasion.

—Oh, indeed, no!—I am not ashamed to make you laugh, occasionally. I think I could read you something I have in my desk which would probably make you smile. Perhaps I will read it one of these days, if you are patient with me when I am sentimental and reflective; not just now. The ludicrous has its place in the universe; it is not a human invention, but one of the Divine ideas, illustrated in the practical jokes of kittens and monkeys long before Aristophanes or Shakespeare. How curious it is that we always consider solemnity and the absence of all gay surprises and encounter of wits as essential to the idea of the future life of those whom we thus deprive of half their faculties and then call *blessed!* There are not a few who, even in this life, seem to be preparing themselves for that smileless eternity to which they look forward, by banishing all gaiety from their hearts and all joyousness from their countenances. I meet one such in the street not unfrequently, a person of intelligence and education, but who gives me (and all that he passes) such a rayless and chilling look of recognition,—something as if he were one of Heaven's assessors, come down to "doom" every acquaintance he met, —that I have sometimes begun to sneeze on the spot, and gone home with a violent cold, dating from that instant. I don't doubt he would cut his kitten's tail off, if he caught her playing with it. Please tell me, who taught her to play with it?

No, no!—give me a chance to talk to you, my fellow-boarders, and you need not be afraid that I shall have any scruples about entertaining you, if I can do it, as well as giving you some of my serious thoughts, and perhaps my sadder fancies. I know nothing in English or any other literature more admirable than that sentiment of Sir Thomas Browne: "EVERY MAN TRULY LIVES, SO LONG AS HE ACTS HIS NATURE, OR SOME WAY MAKES GOOD THE FACULTIES OF HIMSELF."

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving: To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it,—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor. There is one very sad thing in old friendships, to every mind that is really moving onward. It is this: that one cannot help using his early friends as the seaman uses the log, to mark his progress. Every now and then we throw an old schoolmate over the stern with a string of thought tied to him, and look—I am afraid with a kind of luxurious and sanctimonious compassion—to see the rate at which the string reels off, while he lies there bobbing up and down, poor fellow! and we are dashing along with the white foam and bright sparkle at our bows;—the ruffled bosom of prosperity and progress, with a sprig of diamonds stuck in it! But this is only the sentimental side of the matter; for grow we must, if we outgrow all that we love.

Don't misunderstand that metaphor of heaving the log, I beg you. It is merely a smart way of saying that we cannot avoid measuring our rate of movement by those with whom we have long been in the habit of comparing ourselves; and when they once become stationary, we can get our reckoning from them with painful accuracy. We see just what we were when they were our peers, and can strike the balance between that and whatever we may feel ourselves to be now. No doubt we may sometimes be mistaken. If we change our last simile to that very old and familiar one of a fleet leaving the harbor and sailing in company for some distant region, we can get what we want out of it. There is one of our companions;—her streamers were torn into rags before she had got into the open sea, then by and by her sails blew out of the ropes one after another, the waves swept her deck, and as night came on we left her a seeming wreck, as we flew under our pyramid of canvas. But lo! at dawn she is still in sight,—it may be in advance of us. Some deep ocean-current has been moving her on, strong, but silent,—yes, stronger than these noisy winds that puff our sails until they are swollen as the cheeks of jubilant cherubim. And when at last the black steam-tug with the skeleton arms, which comes out of the mist sooner or later and takes us all in tow, grapples her and goes off panting and groaning with her, it is to that harbor where all wrecks are refitted, and where, alas! we, towering in our pride, may never come.

So you will not think I mean to speak lightly of old friendships, because we cannot help instituting comparisons between our present and former selves by the aid of those who were what we were, but are not what we are. Nothing strikes one more, in the race of life, than to see how many give out in the first half of the course. "Commencement day" always reminds me of the start for the "Derby," when the beautiful high-bred three-year olds of the season are brought up for trial. That day is the start, and life is the race. Here we are at Cambridge, and a class is just "graduating." Poor Harry! he was to have been there too, but he has paid forfeit; step out here into the grass back of the church; ah! there it is:—

"HUNC LAPIDEM POSUERUNT
SOCII MŒRENTES."

But this is the start, and here they are,—coats bright as silk, and manes as smooth as *eau lustrale* can make them. Some of the best of the colts are pranced round, a few minutes each, to show their paces. What is that old gentleman crying about? and the old lady by him, and the three girls, what are they all covering their eyes for? Oh, that is *their* colt which has just been trotted up on the stage. Do they really think those little thin legs can do anything in such a slashing sweepstakes as is coming off in these next forty years? Oh, this terrible gift of second-sight that comes to some of us when we begin to look through the silvered rings of the *arcus senilis!*

Ten years gone. First turn in the race. A few broken down; two or three bolted. Several show in advance of the ruck. *Cassock*, a black colt, seems to be ahead of the rest; those black colts commonly get the start, I have noticed, of the others, in the first quarter. *Meteor* has pulled up.

Twenty years. Second corner turned. *Cassock* has dropped from the front, and *Judex*, an iron-gray, has the lead. But look! how they have thinned out! Down flat,—five,—six,—how many? They lie still enough! they will not get up again in this race, be very sure! And the rest of them, what a "tailing off"! Anybody can see who is going to win,—perhaps.

Thirty years. Third corner turned. *Dives*, bright sorrel, ridden by the fellow in a yellow jacket, begins to make play fast; is getting to be the favourite with many. But who is that other one that has been lengthening his stride from the first, and now shows close up to the front? Don't you remember the quiet brown colt *Asteroid*, with the star in his forehead? That is he; he is one of the sort that lasts; look out for him! The black "colt," as we used to call him, is in the background, taking it easily in a gentle trot. There is one they used to call *the Filly*, on account of a certain feminine air he had; well up, you see; the Filly is not to be despised, my boy!

Forty years. More dropping off,—but places much as before.

Fifty years. Race over. All that are on the course are coming in at a walk; no more running. Who is ahead? Ahead? What! and the winning-post a slab of white or gray stone standing out from that turf where there is no more jockeying or straining for victory! Well, the world marks their places in its betting-book; but be sure that these matter very little, if they have run as well as they knew how!

—Did I not say to you a little while ago that the universe swam in an ocean of similitudes and analogies? I will not quote Cowley, or Burns, or Wordsworth, just now, to show you what thoughts were suggested to them by the simplest natural objects, such as a flower or a leaf; but I will read you a few lines, if you do not object, suggested by looking at a section of one of those chambered shells to which is given the name of Pearly Nautilus. We need not trouble ourselves about the distinction between this and the Paper Nautilus, the *Argonauta* of the ancients. The name applied to both shows that each has long been compared to a ship, as you may see more fully in Webster's Dictionary, or the "Encyclopedia," to which he refers. If you will look into Roget's Bridgewater Treatise, you will find a figure of one of these shells, and a section of it. The last will show you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral. Can you find no lesson in this?

[illegible]

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS[1]

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,

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[1] I have now and then found a naturalist who still worried over the distinction between the Pearly Nautilus and the Paper Nautilus, or Argonauta. As the stories about both are mere fables, attaching to the Physalia, or Portuguese man-of-war, as well as to these two molluscs, it seems over-nice to quarrel with the poetical handling of a fiction sufficiently justified by the name commonly applied to the ship of pearl as well as the ship of paper.

Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

XI

[The company looked a little flustered one morning when I came in,—so much so, that I inquired of my neighbor, the divinity-student, what had been going on. It appears that the young fellow whom they call John had taken advantage of my being a little late (I having been rather longer than usual dressing that morning) to circulate several questions involving a quibble or play upon words,—in short, containing that indignity to the human understanding, condemned in the passages from the distinguished moralist of the last century and the illustrious historian of the present, which I cited on a former occasion, and known as a *pun*. After breakfast, one of the boarders handed me a small roll of paper containing some of the questions and their answers. I subjoin two or three of them, to show what a tendency there is to frivolity and meaningless talk in young persons of a certain sort, when not restrained by the presence of more reflective natures.—It was asked, "Why tertian and quartan fevers were like certain short-lived insects." Some interesting physiological relation would be naturally suggested. The inquirer blushes to find that the answer is in the paltry equivocation, that they *skip* a day or two.—"Why an Englishman must go to the Continent to weaken his grog or punch." The answer proves to have no relation whatever to the temperance-movement, as no better reason is given than that island- (or, as it is absurdly written, *ile and*) water won't mix.—But when I came to the next question and its answer, I felt that patience ceased to be a virtue. "Why an onion is like a piano" is a query that a person of sensibility would be slow to propose; but that in an educated community an individual could be found to answer it in these words,—"Because it smell odious," *quasi*, it's melodious,—is not credible, but too true. I can show you the paper.

Dear reader, I beg your pardon for repeating such things. I know most conversations reported in books are altogether above such trivial details, but folly will come up at every table as surely as purslain and chickweed and sorrel will come up in gardens. This young fellow ought to have talked philosophy, I know perfectly well; but he did n't,—he made jokes.

I am willing,—I said,—to exercise your ingenuity in a rational and contemplative manner.—No, I do not proscribe certain forms of philosophical speculation which involve an approach to the absurd or the ludicrous, such as you may find, for example, in the folio of the Reverend Father Thomas Sanchez, in his famous Disputations, "De Sancto Matrimonio." I will therefore turn this levity of yours to profit by reading you a rhymed problem, wrought out by my friend the Professor.

THE DEACON'S MASTERPIECE:

OR THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS-SHAY"

A Logical Story

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss-shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I 'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss-shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that 's the reason, beyond a doubt,
A chaise *breaks down*, but does n't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*,")
He would build one shay to beat the taown

'n' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
—"Fur," said the Deacon, " 't's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'n' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That could n't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees;
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they could n't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."—
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew."

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?

But there stood the stout old one-hoss-shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

Eighteen hundred;—it came and found
The Deacon's Masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and fifty-five.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

First of November,—the Earthquake-day.—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss-shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local as one may say.
There could n't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there was n't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whippletree neither less nor more,
And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out!*

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss-shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
—First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
—What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss-shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

BRUTE NEIGHBORS

Chapter XII of *Walden, or Life in the Woods*

Sometimes I had a companion in my fishing, who came through the village to my house from the other side of the town, and the catching of the dinner was as much a social exercise as the eating of it.

Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing now. I have not heard so much as a locust over the sweet-fern these three hours. The pigeons are all asleep upon their roosts,—no flutter from them. Was that a farmer's noon horn which sounded from beyond the woods just now? The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry themselves so? He that does not eat need not work. I wonder how much they have reaped. Who would live there where a body can never think for the barking of Bose? And O, the housekeeping! to keep bright the devil's door-knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day! Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-parties! Only a woodpecker tapping. O, they swarm; the sun is too warm there; they are born too far into life for me. I have water from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on the shelf.—Hark! I hear a rustling of the leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my sumachs and sweet-briers tremble.—Eh, Mr. Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-day?

Poet. See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen to-day. There's nothing like it in old paintings, nothing like it in foreign lands,—unless when we were off the coast of Spain. That's a true Mediterranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go a-fishing. That's the true industry for poets. It is the only trade I have learned. Come, let's along.

Hermit. I cannot resist. My brown bread will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon, but I am just concluding a serious meditation. I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me alone, then, for a while. But that we may not be delayed, you shall be digging the bait meanwhile. Angle-worms are rarely to be met with in these parts, where the soil was never fattened with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that of catching the fish, when one's appetite is not too keen; and this you may have all to yourself to-day. I would advise you to set in the spade down yonder among the ground-nuts, where you see the johnswort waving. I think that I may warrant you one worm to every three sods you turn up, if you look well in among the roots of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise, for I have found the increase of fair bait to be very nearly as the squares of the distances.

Hermit alone. Let me see; where was I? Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind; the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring this meditation to an end, would another so sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near being resolved into the essence of things as ever I was in my life. I fear my thoughts will not come back to me. If it would do any good, I would whistle for them. When they make us an offer, is it wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts have left no track, and I cannot find the path again. What was it that I was thinking of? It was a very hazy day. I will just try these three sentences of Con-fut-see; they may fetch that state about again. I know not whether it was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem. There never is but one opportunity of a kind.

Poet. How now, Hermit, is it too soon? I have got just thirteen whole ones, beside several which are imperfect or undersized; but they will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover up the hook so much. Those village worms are quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off one without finding the skewer.

Hermit. Well, then, let's be off. Shall we to the Concord? There's good sport there if the water be not too high.

Why do precisely these objects which we behold make a world? Why has man just these species of animals for his neighbors; as if nothing but a mouse could have filled this crevice? I suspect that Pilpay & Co. have put animals to their best use, for they are all beasts of burden, in a sense, made to carry some portion of our thoughts.

The mice which haunted my house were not the common ones, which are said to have been introduced into the country, but a wild native kind not found in the village. I sent one to a distinguished naturalist, and it interested him much. When I was building, one of these had its nest underneath the house, and before I had laid the second floor, and swept out the shavings, would come out regularly at lunch time and pick up the crumbs at my feet. It probably had never seen a man before; and it soon became quite familiar, and would run over my shoes and up my clothes. It could readily ascend the sides of the room by short impulses, like a squirrel, which it resembled in its motions. At length, as I leaned with my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner, while I kept the latter close, and dodged and played at bo-peep with it; and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and afterward cleaned its face and paws, like a fly, and walked away.

A phœbe soon built in my shed, and a robin for protection in a pine which grew against the house. In June the partridge, (*Tetrao umbellus*,) which is so shy a bird, led her brood past my windows, from the woods in the rear to the front of my house, clucking and calling to them like a hen, and in all her behavior proving herself the hen of the woods. The young suddenly disperse on your approach, at a signal from the mother, as if a whirlwind had swept them away, and they so exactly resemble the dried leaves and twigs that many a traveller has placed his foot in the midst of a brood, and heard the whir of the old bird as she flew off, and her anxious calls and mewing, or seen her trail her wings to attract his attention, without suspecting their neighborhood. The parent will sometimes roll and spin round before you in such a dishabille, that you cannot, for a few moments, detect what kind of creature it is. The young squat still and flat, often running their heads under a leaf, and mind only their mother's directions given from a distance, nor will your approach make them run again and betray themselves. You may even tread on them, or have your eyes on them for a minute, without discovering them. I have held them in my open hand at such a time, and still their only care, obedient to their mother and their instinct, was to squat there without fear or trembling. So perfect is this instinct, that once, when I had laid them on the leaves again, and one accidentally fell on its side, it was found with the rest in exactly the same position ten minutes afterward. They are not callow like the young of most birds, but more perfectly developed and precocious even than chickens. The remarkably adult yet innocent expression of their open and serene eyes is very memorable. All intelligence seems reflected in them. They suggest not merely the purity of infancy, but a wisdom clarified by experience. Such an eye was not born when the bird was, but is coeval with the sky it reflects. The woods do not yield another such a gem. The traveller does not often look into such a limpid well. The ignorant or reckless sportsman often shoots the parent at such a time, and leaves these innocents to fall a prey to some prowling beast or bird, or gradually mingle with the decaying leaves which they so much resemble. It is said that when hatched by a hen they will directly disperse on some alarm, and so are lost, for they never hear the mother's call which gathers them again. These were my hens and chickens.

It is remarkable how many creatures live wild and free though secret in the woods, and still sustain themselves in the neighborhood of towns, suspected by hunters only. How retired the otter manages to live here! He grows to be four feet long, as big as a small boy, perhaps without any human being getting a glimpse of him. I formerly saw the raccoon in the woods behind where my house is built, and probably still heard their whinnering at night. Commonly I rested an hour or two in the shade at noon, after planting, and ate my lunch, and read a little by a spring which was the source of a swamp and of a brook, oozing from under Brister's Hill, half a mile from my field. The approach to this was through a succession of descending grassy hollows, full of young pitch-pines, into a larger wood about the swamp. There, in a very secluded and shaded spot, under a spreading white-pine, there was yet a clean firm sward to sit on. I had dug out the spring and made a well of clear gray water, where I could dip up a pailful without roiling it, and thither I went for this purpose almost every day in midsummer, when the pond was warmest. Thither too the wood-cock led her brood, to probe the mud for worms, flying but a foot above them down the bank, while they ran in a troop beneath; but at last, spying me, she would leave her young and circle round and round me, nearer and nearer till within four or five feet, pretending broken wings and legs, to attract my attention, and get off her young, who would already have taken up their march, with faint wiry peep, single file through the swamp, as she directed. Or I heard the peep of the young when I could not see the parent bird. There too the turtle-doves sat over the spring, or fluttered from bough to bough of the soft white-pines over my head; or the red squirrel, coursing down the nearest bough, was particularly familiar and inquisitive. You only need sit still long enough in some attractive spot in the woods that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves to you by turns.

I was witness to events of a less peaceful character. One day when I went out to my wood-pile, or rather my pile of stumps, I observed two large ants, the one red, the other much larger, nearly half an inch long, and black, fiercely contending with one another. Having once got hold they never let go, but struggled and wrestled and rolled on the chips incessantly. Looking farther, I was surprised to find that the chips were covered with such combatants, that it was not a *duellum*, but a *bellum*, a war between two races of ants, the red always pitted against the black, and frequently two red ones to one black. The legions of these Myrmidons covered all the hills and vales in my wood-yard, and the ground was already strewn with the dead and dying, both red and black. It was the only battle which I have ever witnessed, the only battle-field I ever trod while the battle was raging; internecine war; the red republicans on the one hand, and the black imperialists on the other. On every side they were engaged in deadly combat, yet without any noise that I could hear, and human soldiers never fought so resolutely. I watched a couple that were fast locked in each other's embraces, in a little sunny valley amid the chips, now at noon-day prepared to fight till the sun went down, or life went out. The smaller red champion had fastened himself like a vice to his adversary's front, and through all the tumblings on that field never for an instant ceased to gnaw at one of his feelers near the root, having already caused the other to go by the board; while the stronger black one dashed him from side to side, and, as I saw on looking nearer, had already divested him of several of his members. They fought with more pertinacity than bull-dogs. Neither manifested the least disposition to retreat. It was evident that their battle-cry was Conquer or die. In the mean while there came along a single red ant on the hill-side of this valley, evidently full of excitement, who either had despatched his foe, or had not yet taken part in the battle; probably the latter, for he had lost none of his limbs; whose mother had charged him to return with his shield or upon it. Or perchance he was some Achilles, who had nourished his wrath apart, and had now come to avenge or rescue his Patroclus. He saw this unequal combat from afar,—for the blacks were nearly twice the size of the red,—he drew near with rapid pace till he stood on his guard within half an inch of the combatants; then, watching his opportunity, he sprang upon the black warrior, and commenced his operations near the root of his right fore-leg, leaving the foe to select among his own members; and so there were three united for life, as if a new kind of attraction had been invented which put all other locks and cements to shame. I should not have wondered by this time to find that they had their respective musical bands stationed on some eminent chip, and playing their national airs the while, to excite the slow and cheer the dying combatants. I was myself excited somewhat even as if they had been men. The more you think of it, the less the difference. And certainly there is not the fight recorded in Concord history, at least, if in the history of America, that will bear a moment's comparison with this, whether for the numbers engaged in it, or for the patriotism and heroism displayed. For numbers and for carnage it was an Austerlitz or Dresden. Concord Fight! Two killed on the patriots' side, and Luther Blanchard wounded! Why, here every ant was a Buttrick,—"Fire! for God's sake fire!"—and thousands shared the fate of Davis and Hosmer. There was not one hireling there. I have no doubt that it was a principle they fought for, as much as our ancestors, and not to avoid a three-penny tax on their tea; and the results of this battle will be as important and memorable to those whom it concerns as those of the battle of Bunker Hill, at least.

I took up the chip on which the three I have particularly described were struggling, carried it into my house, and placed it under a tumbler on my window-sill, in order to see the issue. Holding a microscope to the first-mentioned red ant, I saw that, though he was assiduously gnawing at the near fore-leg of his enemy, having severed his remaining feeler, his own breast was all torn away, exposing what vitals he had there to the jaws of the black warrior, whose breast-plate was apparently too thick for him to pierce; and the dark carbuncles of the sufferers' eyes shone with ferocity such as war only could excite. They struggled half an hour longer under the tumbler, and when I looked again the black soldier had severed the heads of his foes from their bodies, and the still living heads were hanging on either side of him like ghastly trophies at his saddle-bow, still apparently as firmly fastened as ever, and he was endeavoring with feeble struggles, being without feelers and with only the remnant of a leg, and I know not how many other wounds, to divest himself of them; which at length, after half an hour more, he accomplished. I raised the glass, and he went off over the window-sill in that crippled state. Whether he finally survived that combat, and spent the remainder of his days in some Hotel des Invalides, I do not know; but I thought that his industry would not be worth much thereafter. I never learned which party was victorious, nor the cause of the war; but I felt for the rest of that day as if I had had my feelings excited and harrowed by witnessing the struggle, the ferocity and carnage, of a human battle before my door.

Kirby and Spence tell us that the battles of ants have long been celebrated and the date of them recorded, though they say that Huber is the only modern author who appears to have witnessed them. "Æneas Sylvius," say they, "after giving a very circumstantial account of one contested with great obstinacy by a great and small species on the trunk of a pear tree," adds that " 'This action was fought in the pontificate of Eugenius the Fourth, in the presence of Nicholas Pistoriensis, an eminent lawyer, who related the whole history of the battle with the greatest fidelity.' A similar engagement between great and small ants is recorded by Olaus Magnus, in which the small ones, being victorious, are said to have buried the bodies of their own soldiers, but left those of their giant enemies a prey to the birds. This event happened previous to the expulsion of the tyrant Christiern the Second from Sweden." The battle which I witnessed took place in the Presidency of Polk, five years before the passage of Webster's Fugitive-Slave Bill.

Many a village Bose, fit only to course a mud-turtle in a victualling cellar, sported his heavy quarters in the woods, without the knowledge of his master, and ineffectually smelled at old fox burrows and woodchucks' holes; led perchance by some slight cur which nimbly threaded the wood, and might still inspire a natural terror in its denizens;—now far behind his guide, barking like a canine bull toward some small squirrel which had treed itself for scrutiny, then, cantering off, bending the bushes with his weight, imagining that he is on the track of some stray member of the jerbilla family. Once I was surprised to see a cat walking along the stony shore of the pond, for they rarely wander so far from home. The surprise was mutual. Nevertheless the most domestic cat, which has lain on a rug all her days, appears quite at home in the woods, and, by her sly and stealthy behavior, proves herself more native there than the regular inhabitants. Once, when berrying, I met with a cat with young kittens in the woods, quite wild, and they all, like their mother, had their backs up and were fiercely spitting at me. A few years before I lived in the woods there was what was called a "winged cat" in one of the farm-houses in Lincoln nearest the pond, Mr. Gilian Baker's. When I called to see her in June, 1842, she was gone a-hunting in the woods, as was her wont, (I am not sure whether it was a male or female, and so use the more common pronoun,) but her mistress told me that she came into the neighborhood a little more than a year before, in April, and was finally taken into their house;

that she was of a dark brownish-gray color, with a white spot on her throat, and white feet, and had a large bushy tail like a fox; that in the winter the fur grew thick and flatted out along her sides, forming strips ten or twelve inches long by two and a half wide, and under her chin like a muff, the upper side loose, the under matted like felt, and in the spring these appendages dropped off. They gave me a pair of her "wings," which I keep still. There is no appearance of a membrane about them. Some thought it was part flying-squirrel or some other wild animal, which is not impossible, for, according to naturalists, prolific hybrids have been produced by the union of the marten and domestic cat. This would have been the right kind of cat for me to keep, if I had kept any; for why should not a poet's cat be winged as well as his horse?

In the fall the loon (*Colymbus glacialis*) came, as usual, to moult and bathe in the pond, making the woods ring with his wild laughter before I had risen. At rumor of his arrival all the Mill-dam sportsmen are on the alert, in gigs and on foot, two by two and three by three, with patent rifles and conical balls and spy-glasses. They come rustling through the woods like autumn leaves, at least ten men to one loon. Some station themselves on this side of the pond, some on that, for the poor bird cannot be omnipresent; if he dive here he must come up there. But now the kind October wind rises, rustling the leaves and rippling the surface of the water, so that no loon can be heard or seen, though his foes sweep the pond with spy-glasses, and make the woods resound with their discharges. The waves generously rise and dash angrily, taking sides with all waterfowl, and our sportsmen must beat a retreat to town and shop and unfinished jobs. But they were too often successful. When I went to get a pail of water early in the morning I frequently saw this stately bird sailing out of my cove within a few rods. If I endeavored to overtake him in a boat, in order to see how he would manœuvre, he would dive and be completely lost, so that I did not discover him again, sometimes, till the latter part of the day. But I was more than a match for him on the surface. He commonly went off in a rain.

As I was paddling along the north shore one very calm October afternoon, for such days especially they settle on to the lakes, like the milkweed down, having looked in vain over the pond for a loon, suddenly one, sailing out from the shore toward the middle a few rods in front of me, set up his wild laugh and betrayed himself. I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when he came up again I was nearer than before. He dived again, but I miscalculated the direction he would take, and we were fifty rods apart when he came to the surface this time, for I had helped to widen the interval; and again he laughed long and loud, and with more reason than before. He manœuvred so cunningly that I could not get within half a dozen rods of him. Each time, when he came to the surface, turning his head this way and that, he coolly surveyed the water and the land, and apparently chose his course so that he might come up where there was the widest expanse of water and at the greatest distance from the boat. It was surprising how quickly he made up his mind and put his resolve into execution. He led me at once to the widest part of the pond, and could not be driven from it. While he was thinking one thing in his brain, I was endeavoring to divine his thought in mine. It was a pretty game, played on the smooth surface of the pond, a man against a loon. Suddenly your adversary's checker disappears beneath the board, and the problem is to place yours nearest to where his will appear again. Sometimes he would come up unexpectedly on the opposite side of me, having apparently passed directly under the boat. So long-winded was he and so unweariable, that when he had swum farthest he would immediately plunge again, nevertheless; and then no wit could divine where in the deep pond, beneath the smooth surface, he might be speeding his way like a fish, for he had time and ability to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest part. It is said that loons have been caught in the New York lakes eighty feet beneath the surface, with hooks set for trout,—though Walden is deeper than that. How surprised must the fishes be to see this ungainly visitor from another sphere speeding his way amid their schools! Yet he appeared to know his course as surely under water as on the surface, and swam much faster there. Once or twice I saw a ripple where he approached the surface, just put his head out to reconnoitre, and instantly dived again. I found that it was as well for me to rest on my oars and wait his reappearing as to endeavor to calculate where he would rise; for again and again, when I was straining my eyes over the surface one way, I would suddenly be startled by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why, after displaying so much cunning, did he invariably betray himself the moment he came up by that loud laugh? Did not his white breast enough betray him? He was indeed a silly loon, I thought. I could commonly hear the plash of the water when he came up, and so also detected him. But after an hour he seemed as fresh as ever, dived as willingly, and swam yet farther than at first. It was surprising to see how serenely he sailed off with unruffled breast when he came to the surface, doing all the work with his webbed feet beneath. His usual note was this demoniac laughter, yet somewhat like that of a water-fowl; but occasionally, when he had balked me most successfully and come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn unearthly howl, probably more like that of a wolf than any bird; as when a beast puts his muzzle to the ground and deliberately howls. This was his looning,—perhaps the wildest sound that is ever heard here, making the woods ring far and wide. I concluded that he laughed in derision of my efforts, confident of his own resources. Though the sky was by this time overcast, the pond was so smooth that I could see where he broke the surface when I did not hear him. His white breast, the stillness of the air, and the smoothness of the water were all against him. At length, having come up fifty rods off, he uttered one of those prolonged howls, as if calling on the god of loons to aid him, and immediately there came a wind from the east and rippled the surface, and filled the whole air with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it were the prayer of the loon answered, and his god was angry with me; and so I left him disappearing far away on the tumultuous surface.

For hours, in fall days, I watched the ducks cunningly tack and veer and hold the middle of the pond, far from the sportsman; tricks which they will have less need to practise in Louisiana bayous. When compelled to rise they would sometimes circle round and round and over the pond at a considerable height, from which they could easily see to other ponds and the river, like black motes in the sky; and, when I thought they had gone off thither long since, they would settle down by a slanting flight of a quarter of a mile on to a distant part which was left free; but what beside safety they got by sailing in the middle of Walden I do not know, unless they love its water for the same reason that I do.

Henry David Thoreau

James Russell Lowell (1819-1891)

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

PART FIRST

PRELUDE

Over his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay;
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb, and know it not;
Over our manhood bend the skies;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood
Waits with its benedicite;
And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the Devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,

Bubbles we earn with a whole soul's tasking:
'T is heaven alone that is given away,
'T is only God may be had for the asking;
There is no price set on the lavish summer,
And June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays:
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, grasping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf or a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back, with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;

Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God so wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'T is enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
'T is as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—
'T is the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,
And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?

Part First

I

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For to-morrow I go over land and sea
In search of the Holy Grail;
Shall never a bed for me be spread,
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
Till I begin my vow to keep;
Here on the rushes will I sleep,
And perchance there may come a vision true
Ere day create the world anew."
Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
And into his soul the vision flew.

II

The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
In the pool drowsed the cattle up to their knees,
The little birds sang as if it were
The one day of summer in all the year,
And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees:
The castle alone in the landscape lay
Like an outpost of winter, dull and gray;
'T was the proudest hall in the North Countree,
And never its gates might opened be,
Save to lord or lady of high degree;
Summer besieged it on every side,
But the churlish stone her assaults defied;
She could not scale the chilly wall,
Though around it for leagues her pavilions tall
Stretched left and right,
Over the hills and out of sight;
Green and broad was every tent,
And out of each a murmur went
Till the breeze fell off at night.

III

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang,
And through the dark arch a charger sprang,
Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,
In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
It seemed the dark castle had gathered all
Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall
In his siege of three hundred summers long,
And, binding them all in one blazing sheaf,
Had cast them forth: so, young and strong,
And lightsome as a locust-leaf,
Sir Launfal flashed forth in his unscarred mail,
To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

IV

It was morning on hill and stream and tree,
And morning in the young knight's heart;
Only the castle moodily
Rebuffed the gifts of the sunshine free,
And gloomed by itself apart;
The season brimmed all other things up
Full as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's cup.

V

As Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate,
He was ware of a leper, crouched by the same,
Who begged with his hand and moaned as he sate;
And a loathing over Sir Launfal came,
The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill,
The flesh 'neath his armor did shrink and crawl,
And midway its leap his heart stood still
Like a frozen waterfall;
For this man, so foul and bent of stature,
Rasped harshly against his dainty nature,
And seemed the one blot on the summer morn,—
So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

VI

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door,
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
  Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives but a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
  That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite,—
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

PART SECOND

PRELUDE

Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak,
  From the snow five thousand summers old;
On open wold and hill-top bleak
  It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek;
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleafed boughs and pastures bare;
The little brook heard it and built a roof
'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars
As the lashes of light that trim the stars;
He sculptured every summer delight
In his halls and chambers out of sight;
Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest-crypt,

Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Bending to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;
Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond drops,
That crystalled the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one:
No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'T was as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each flitting shadow of earth and sky,
Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas glow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
With lightsome green of ivy and holly;
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide
Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
    And rattles and wrings
    The icy strings,
    Singing, in dreary monotone,
    A Christmas carol of its own,
    Whose burden still, as he might guess,
    Was—"Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"

The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch
As he shouted the wanderer away from the porch,
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night
  The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,
  Through the window-slits of the castle old,
Build out its piers of ruddy light
  Against the drift of the cold.

PART SECOND

I

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was dumb and could not speak,
  For the frost's swift shuttles its shroud had spun;
A single crow on the tree-top bleak
  From his shining feathers shed off the cold sun;
Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold,
As if her veins were sapless and old,
And she rose up decrepitly
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

II

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate,
For another heir in his earldom sate;
An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,

But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

III

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbèd air,
For it was just at the Christmas time;
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier clime,
And sought for a shelter from cold and snow
In the light and warmth of long ago;
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl
O'er the edge of the desert, black and small,
Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one,
He can count the camels in the sun,
As over the red-hot sands they pass
To where, in its slender necklace of grass,
The little spring laughed and leapt in the shade,
And with its own self like an infant played,
And waved its signal of palms.

IV

"For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms";—
The happy camels may reach the spring,
But Sir Launfal sees naught save the grewsome thing,
The leper, lank as the rain-blanched bone,
That cowered beside him, a thing as lone
And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas
In the desolate horror of his disease.

V

And Sir Launfal said,—"I behold in thee
An image of Him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,—
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns,—
And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side:

Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
Behold, through him, I give to Thee!"

VI

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
  And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he
Remembered in what a haughtier guise
  He had flung an alms to leprosie,
When he caged his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink;
'T was a mouldy crust of coarse brown bread,
  'T was water out of a wooden bowl,—
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
  And 't was red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

VII

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate,—
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.

VIII

His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,
That mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was calmer than silence said,
"Lo, it is I, be not afraid!

In many climes, without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold, it is here,—this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
This crust is my body broken for thee,
This water His blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need,—
Not that which we give, but what we share,—
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

IX

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swound:—
"The Grail in my castle here is found!
Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet-hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

X

The castle-gate stands open now,
And the wanderer is welcome to the hall
As the hangbird is to the elm-tree bough;
No longer scowl the turrets tall,
The Summer's long siege at last is o'er;
When the first poor outcast went in at the door,
She entered with him in disguise,
And mastered the fortress by surprise;
There is no spot she loves so well on ground,
She lingers and smiles there the whole year round;
The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land
Has hall and bower at his command;
And there's no poor man in the North Countree
But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

James Russell Lowell

THE PRESENT CRISIS

When a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad earth's aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east to west,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the soul within him climb
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy sublime
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny stem of Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace shoots the instantaneous throe,
When the travail of the Ages wrings earth's systems to and fro;
At the birth of each new Era, with a recognizing start,
Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with mute lips apart,
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child leaps beneath the Future's heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a terror and a chill,
Under continent to continent, the sense of coming ill,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels his sympathies with God
In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to be drunk up by the sod,
Till a corpse crawls round unburied, delving in the nobler clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct bears along,
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift flash of right or wrong;
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Humanity's vast frame
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the gush of joy or shame;—
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt stand,
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes the dust against our land?
Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 't is Truth alone is strong,
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the beacon-moments see,
That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut through Oblivion's sea;
Not an ear in court or market for the low foreboding cry
Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers, from whose feet earth's chaff must fly;
Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment hath passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow keeping watch above his own.

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of fate,
But the soul is still oracular; amid the market's din,
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within,—
"They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops, fellest of the giant brood,
Sons of brutish Force and Darkness, who have drenched the earth with blood,
Famished in his self-made desert, blinded by our purer day,
Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his miserable prey;—
Shall we guide his gory fingers where our helpless children play?

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes,—they were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone,
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back,
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned
One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts hath burned
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned.

For Humanity sweeps onward: where to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

'T is as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' graves,
Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light a crime;—
Was the "Mayflower" launched by cowards, steered by men behind their time?
Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts,
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;
But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath made us free,
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-fires;
Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps away
To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pilgrims be.
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

December, 1844

ALADDIN

When I was a beggarly boy,
And lived in a cellar damp,
I had not a friend nor a toy,
But I had Aladdin's lamp;
When I could not sleep for the cold,
I had fire enough in my brain,
And builded, with roofs of gold,
My beautiful castles in Spain!

Since then I have toiled day and night,
I have money and power good store,
But I'd give all my lamps of silver bright,
For the one that is mine no more;
Take, Fortune, whatever you choose,
You gave, and may snatch again;
I have nothing 't would pain me to lose,
For I own no more castles in Spain!

James Russell Lowell

THE COURTIN'

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clear grit an' human natur';
None could n't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
He'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelins flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle.

His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal . . . . no . . . . I come dasignin'"—
"To see my Ma? She is sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t' other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He could n't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister";
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' . . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

James Russell Lowell

A FABLE FOR CRITICS

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse, the Lord knows,
Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even prose;
I 'm speaking of metres; some poems have welled
From those rare depths of soul that have ne'er been excelled;
They 're not epics, but that does n't matter a pin,
In creating, the only hard thing 's to begin;
A grass-blade 's no easier to make than an oak;
If you've once found the way, you 've achieved the grand stroke;
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,
But thrown in a heap with a crush and a clatter;
Now it is not one thing nor another alone
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly perfect may be,
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree.

"But, to come back to Emerson (whom, by the way,
I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may say,

A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other the Exchange;
He seems, to my thinking (although I'm afraid
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made),
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian's gold mist
And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist;
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he 's got
To I don't (nor they either) exactly know what;
For though he builds glorious temples, 't is odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected;
And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,
A convert to—nothing but Emerson.
So perfect a balance there is in his head,
That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,
Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere dab in it;
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer;
You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,
With the quiet precision of science he'll sort 'em
But you can't help suspecting the whole a *post mortem*. . . .

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified,
Save when by reflection 't is kindled o' nights
With a semblance of flame by the chill Northern Lights.
He may rank (Griswold says so) first bard of your nation
(There 's no doubt that he stands in supreme ice-olation),

Your topmost Parnassus he may set his heel on,
But no warm applauses come, peal following peal on,—
He 's too smooth and too polished to hang any zeal on:
Unqualified merits, I 'll grant, if you choose, he has 'em,
But he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm;
If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
Like being stirred up with the very North Pole.

"He is very nice reading in summer, but *inter*
Nos, we don't want *extra* freezing in winter;
Take him up in the depth of July, my advice is,
When you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices.
But, deduct all you can, there 's enough that 's right good in him,
He has a true soul for field, river, and wood in him;
And his heart, in the midst of brick walls, or where'er it is,
Glows, softens, and thrills with the tenderest charities—
To you mortals that delve in this trade-ridden planet?
No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their limestone and granite.
If you 're one who *in loco* (add *foco* here) *desipis*,
You will get of his outermost heart (as I guess) a piece;
But you'd get deeper down if you came as a precipice,
And would break the last seal of its inwardest fountain,
If you only could palm yourself off for a mountain.
Mr. Quivis, or somebody quite as discerning,
Some scholar who 's hourly expecting his learning,
Calls B. the American Wordsworth; but Wordsworth
May be rated at more than your whole tuneful herd 's worth.
No, don't be absurd, he 's an excellent Bryant;
But, my friends, you 'll endanger the life of your client,
By attempting to stretch him up into a giant: . . . .

"But, my dear little bardlings, don't prick up your ears
Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant as peers;
If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say
There is nothing in that which is grand in its way;

He is almost the one of your poets that knows
How much grace, strength, and dignity lie in Repose;
If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise to mar
His thought's modest fulness by going too far;
'T would be well if your authors should all make a trial
Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,
And measure their writings by Hesiod's staff,
Which teaches that all has less value than half.

"There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart,
And reveals the live Man, still supreme and erect,
Underneath the bemummying wrappers of sect;
There was ne'er a man born who had more of the swing
Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of thing;
And his failures arise (though he seem not to know it)
From the very same cause that has made him a poet,—
A fervor of mind which knows no separation
'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration,
As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred from not knowing
If 't were I or mere wind through her tripod was blowing;
Let his mind once get head in its favorite direction
And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of reflection,
While, borne with the rush of the metre along,
The poet may chance to go right or go wrong,
Content with the whirl and delirium of song;
Then his grammar's not always correct, nor his rhymes,
And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics sometimes,
Not his best, though, for those are struck off at white-heats
When the heart in his breast like a trip-hammer beats,
And can ne'er be repeated again any more
Than they could have been carefully plotted before:
Like old what's-his-name there at the battle of Hastings
(Who, however, gave more than mere rhythmical bastings),
Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights

For reform and whatever they call human rights,
Both singing and striking in front of the war,
And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor;
Anne haec, one exclaims, on beholding his knocks,
Vestis filii tui, O leather-clad Fox?
Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,
Preaching brotherly love and then driving it in
To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's spring
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a sling?

"All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard
Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave
When to look but a protest in silence was brave;
All honor and praise to the women and men
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-trodden then! . . .

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;
'T is as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck;
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man. . . .

"Here's Cooper, who's written six volumes to show
He's as good as a lord: well, let's grant that he's so;
If a person prefer that description of praise,
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than bays;
But he need take no pains to convince us he's not
(As his enemies say) the American Scott.
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read aloud
That one of his novels of which he's most proud,
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever quitting
Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for acquitting.
He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
His Indians, with proper respect be it said,
Are just Natty Bumpo, daubed over with red,
And his very Long Toms are the same useful Nat,
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'wester hat
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance was found
To have slipped the old fellow away underground).
All his other men-figures are clothes upon sticks,
The *dernière chemise* of a man in a fix
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's small,
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the wall);
And the women he draws from one model don't vary,
All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.
When a character's wanted, he goes to the task
As a cooper would do in composing a cask;
He picks out the staves, of their qualities heedful,
Just hoops them together as tight as is needful,
And, if the best fortune should crown the attempt, he
Has made at the most something wooden and empty.

"Don't suppose I would underrate Cooper's abilities;
If I thought you'd do that, I should feel very ill at ease;
The men who have given to *one* character life

And objective existence are not very rife;
You may number them all, both prose-writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the vicar. . . . .

"There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,
In a way to make people of common sense damn metres,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,
Who—But hey-day! What 's this? Messieurs Mathews and Poe,
You must n't fling mud-balls at Longfellow so,
Does it make a man worse that his character 's such
As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?
Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive
More willing than he that his fellows should thrive;
While you are abusing him thus, even now
He would help either one of you out of a slough;
You may say that he 's smooth and all that till you 're hoarse,
But remember that elegance also is force;
After polishing granite as much as you will,
The heart keeps its tough old persistency still;
Deduct all you can, *that* still keeps you at bay;
Why, he'll live till men weary of Collins and Gray.
I'm not over-fond of Greek metres in English,
To me rhyme's a gain, so it be not too jinglish,
And your modern hexameter verses are no more
Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like Homer;
As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon is,
So, compared to your moderns, sounds old Melesigenes;
I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps, o't is
That I 've heard the old blind man recite his own rhapsodies,
And my ear with that music impregnate may be,

Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of the sea,
Or as one can't bear Strauss when his nature is cloven
To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of Beethoven;
But, set that aside, and 't is truth that I speak,
Had Theocritus written in English, not Greek,
I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce change a line
In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral Evangeline.
That's not ancient nor modern, its place is apart
Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure Art,
'T is a shrine of retreat from Earth's hubbub and strife
As quiet and chaste as the author's own life. . . .

"What! Irving? thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain,
You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
And the gravest sweet humor, that ever were there
Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;
Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,—
I sha 'n't run directly against my own preaching,
And, having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's stock and good-will,
Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain,
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
A name either English or Yankee,— just Irving. . . .

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit;
A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit;
In long poems 't is painful sometimes, and invites
A thought of the way the new Telegraph writes,
Which pricks down its little sharp sentences spitefully
As if you got more than you'd title to rightfully,
And you find yourself hoping its wild father Lightning
Would flame in for a second and give you a fright'ning.
He has perfect sway of what *I* call a sham metre,
But many admire it, the English pentameter,
And Campbell, I think, wrote most commonly worse,
With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same kind of verse,
Nor e'er achieved aught in't so worthy of praise
As the tribute of Holmes to the grand *Marseillaise.*
You went crazy last year over Bulwer's New Timon;—
Why, if B., to the day of his dying, should rhyme on,
Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon tomes,
He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor of Holmes.
His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric
In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foes'.

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem. . . . ."

James Russell Lowell

"OUR LITERATURE"

RESPONSE TO A TOAST AT THE BANQUET IN NEW YORK, APRIL 30, 1889, GIVEN IN COMMEMORATION OF THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF WASHINGTON'S INAUGURATION.

A needful frugality, benignant alike to both the participants in human utterance, has limited the allowance of each speaker this evening to ten minutes. Cut in thicker slices, our little loaf of time would not suffice for all. This seems a meagre ration, but if we give to our life the Psalmist's measure of seventy years, and bear in mind the population of the globe, a little ciphering will show that no single man and brother is entitled even to so large a share of our attention as this. Moreover, how few are the men in any generation who could not deliver the message with which their good or evil genius has charged them in less than the sixth part of an hour.

On an occasion like this, a speaker lies more than usually open to the temptation of seeking the acceptable rather than the judicial word. And yet it is inevitable that public anniversaries, like those of private persons, should suggest self-criticism as well as self-satisfaction. I shall not listen for such suggestions, though I may not altogether conceal that I am conscious of them. I am to speak for literature, and of our own as forming now a recognized part of it. This is not the place for critical balancing of what we have done or left undone in this field. An exaggerated estimate, and that indiscriminateness of praise which implies a fear to speak the truth, would be unworthy of myself or of you. I might indeed read over a list of names now, alas, carven on headstones, since it would be invidious to speak of the living. But the list would be short, and I could call few of the names great as the impartial years measure greatness. I shall prefer to assume that American literature was not worth speaking for at all if it were not quite able to speak for itself, as all others are expected to do.

I think this a commemoration in which it is peculiarly fitting that literature should take part. For we are celebrating to-day our true birthday as a nation, the day when our consciousness of wider interests and larger possibilities began. All that went before was birth-throes. The day also recalls us to a sense of something to which we are too indifferent. I mean that historic continuity, which, as a factor in moulding national individuality, is not only powerful in itself, but cumulative in its operation. In one of these literature finds the soil, and in the other the climate, it needs. Without the stimulus of a national consciousness, no literature could have come into being; under the conditions in which we then were, none that was not parasitic and dependent. Without the continuity which slowly incorporates that consciousness in the general life and thought, no literature could have acquired strength to detach itself and begin a life of its own. And here another thought suggested by the day comes to my mind. Since that precious and persuasive quality, style, may be exemplified as truly in a life as in a work of art, may not the character of the great man whose memory decorates this and all our days, in its dignity, its strength, its calm of passion restrained, its inviolable reserves, furnish a lesson which our literature may study to great advantage? And not our literature alone.

Scarcely had we become a nation when the only part of the Old World whose language we understood began to ask in various tones of despondency where was our literature. We could not improvise Virgils or Miltons, though we made an obliging effort to do it. Failing in this, we thought the question partly unfair and wholly disagreeable. And indeed it had never been put to several nations far older than we, and to which a *vates sacer* had been longer wanting. But, perhaps it was not altogether so ill-natured as it seemed, for, after all, a nation without a literature is imperfectly represented in the parliament of mankind. It implied, therefore, in our case the obligation of an illustrious blood.

With a language in compass and variety inferior to none that has ever been the instrument of human thought or passion or sentiment, we had inherited also the forms and precedents of a literature altogether worthy of it. But these forms and precedents we were to adapt suddenly to novel conditions, themselves still in solution, tentative, formless, atom groping after atom, rather through blind instinct than with conscious purpose. Why wonder if our task proved as long as it was difficult? And it was all the more difficult that we were tempted to free ourselves from the form as well as from the spirit. And we had other notable hindrances. Our reading class was small, scattered thinly along the seaboard, and its wants were fully supplied from abroad, either by importation or piracy. Communication was tedious and costly. Our men of letters, or rather our men with a natural impulsion to a life of letters, were few and isolated, and I cannot recollect that isolation has produced anything in literature better than monkish chronicles, except a Latin hymn or two, and one precious book, the treasure of bruised spirits. Criticism there was none, and what assumed its function was half provincial self-conceit, half patriotic resolve to find swans in birds of quite another species. Above all, we had no capital toward which all the streams of moral and intellectual energy might converge to fill a reservoir on which all could draw. There were many careers open to ambition, all of them more tempting and more gainful than the making of books. Our people were of necessity largely intent on material ends, and our accessions from Europe tended to increase this predisposition. Considering all these things, it is a wonder that in these hundred years we should have produced any literature at all; a still greater wonder that we have produced so much of which we may be honestly proud. Its English descent is and must always be manifest, but it is ever more and more informed with a new spirit, more and more trustful in the guidance of its own thought. But if we would have it become all that we would have it be, we must beware of judging it by a comparison with its own unripe self alone. We must not cuddle it into weakness or wilfulness by over-indulgence. It would be more profitable to think that we have as yet no literature in the highest sense than to insist that what we have should be judged by other than admitted standards, merely because it is ours. In these art matches we must not only expect but rejoice to be pitted against the doughtiest wrestlers, and the lightest-footed runners of all countries and of all times.

Literature has been put somewhat low on the list of toasts, doubtless in deference to necessity of arrangement, put perhaps the place assigned to it here may be taken as roughly indicating that which it occupies in the general estimation. And yet I venture to claim for it an influence, whether for good or evil, more durable and more widely operative than that exerted by any other form in which human genius has found expression. As the special distinction of man is speech, it should seem that there can be no higher achievement of civilized men, no proof more conclusive that they are civilized men, than the power of moulding words into such fair and noble forms as shall people the human mind forever with images that refine, console, and inspire. It is no vain superstition that has made the name of Homer sacred to all who love a bewitchingly simple and yet ideal picture of our human life in its doing and its suffering. And there are books which have kept alive and transmitted the spark of soul that has resuscitated nations. It is an old wives' tale that Virgil was a great magician, yet in that tale survives a witness of the influence which made him, through Dante, a main factor in the revival of Italy after the one had been eighteen and the other five centuries in their graves.

I am not insensible to the wonder and exhilaration of a material growth without example in rapidity and expansion, but I am also not insensitive to the grave perils latent in any civilization which allows its chief energies and interests to be wholly absorbed in the pursuit of a mundane prosperity.

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

I admire our energy, our enterprise, our inventiveness, our multiplicity of resource, no man more; but it is by less visibly remunerative virtues, I persist in thinking, that nations chiefly live and feel the higher meaning of their lives. Prosperous we may be in other ways, contented with more specious successes, but that nation is a mere horde supplying figures to the census which does not acknowledge a truer prosperity and a richer contentment in the things of the mind. Railways and telegraphs reckoned by the thousand miles are excellent things in their way, but I doubt whether it be of their poles and sleepers that the rounds are made of that ladder by which men or nations scale the cliffs whose inspiring obstacle interposes itself between them and the fulfillment of their highest purpose and function.

The literature of a people should be the record of its joys and sorrows, its aspirations and its shortcomings, its wisdom and its folly, the confidant of its soul. We cannot say that our own as yet suffices us, but I believe that he who stands, a hundred years hence, where I am standing now, conscious that he speaks to the most powerful and prosperous community ever devised or developed by man, will speak of our literature with the assurance of one who beholds what we hope for and aspire after, become a reality and a possession forever.

James Russell Lowell

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

REVIEW OF HAWTHORNE'S TWICE-TOLD TALES

We said a few hurried words about Mr. Hawthorne in our last number, with the design of speaking more fully in the present. We are still, however, pressed for room, and must necessarily discuss his volumes more briefly and more at random than their high merits deserve.

The book professes to be a collection of *tales*, yet is, in two respects, misnamed. These pieces are now in their third republication, and, of course, are thrice-told. Moreover, they are by no means *all* tales, either in the ordinary or in the legitimate understanding of the term. Many of them are pure essays; for example, "Sights from a Steeple," "Sunday at Home," "Little Annie's Ramble," "A Rill from the Town Pump," "The Toll-Gatherer's Day," "The Haunted Mind," "The Sister Years," "Snow-Flakes," "Night Sketches," and "Foot-Prints on the Sea-Shore." We mention these matters chiefly on account of their discrepancy with that marked precision and finish by which the body of the work is distinguished.

Of the Essays just named, we must be content to speak in brief. They are each and all beautiful, without being characterized by the polish and adaptation so visible in the tales proper. A painter would at once note their leading or predominant feature, and style it *repose*. There is no attempt at effect. All is quiet, thoughtful, subdued. Yet this repose may exist simultaneously with high originality of thought; and Mr. Hawthorne has demonstrated the fact. At every turn we meet with novel combinations; yet these combinations never surpass the limits of the quiet. We are soothed as we read; and withal is a calm astonishment that ideas so apparently obvious have never occurred or been presented to us before. Herein our author differs materially from Lamb or Hunt or Hazlitt—who, with vivid originality of manner and expression, have less of the true novelty of thought than is generally supposed, and whose originality, at best, has an uneasy and meretricious quaintness, replete with startling effects unfounded in nature, and inducing trains of reflection which lead to no satisfactory result. The Essays of Hawthorne have much of the character of Irving, with more of originality, and less of finish; while, compared with the Spectator, they have a vast superiority at all points. The Spectator, Mr. Irving, and Mr. Hawthorne have in common that tranquil and subdued manner which we have chosen to denominate *repose;* but, in the case of the two former, this repose is attained rather by the absence of novel combination, or of originality, than otherwise, and consists chiefly in the calm, quiet, unostentatious expression of commonplace thoughts, in an unambitious unadulterated Saxon. In them, by strong effort, we are made to conceive the absence of all. In the essays before us the absence of effort is too obvious to be mistaken, and a strong under-current of *suggestion* runs continuously beneath the upper stream of the tranquil thesis. In short, these effusions of Mr. Hawthorne are the product of a truly imaginative intellect, restrained, and in some measure repressed, by fastidiousness of taste, by constitutional melancholy and by indolence.

But it is of his tales that we desire principally to speak. The tale proper, in our opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem *too* brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water upon the rock. De Béranger has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like all immassive bodies, they lack *momentum*, and thus fail to satisfy the Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis.*

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfil the demands of high genius—should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fulness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptionable here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.

We have said that the tale has a point of superiority even over the poem. In fact, while the *rhythm* of this latter is an essential aid in the development of the poem's highest idea—the idea of the Beautiful—the artificialities of this rhythm are an inseparable bar to the development of all points of thought or expression which have their basis in *Truth*. But Truth is often, and in very great degree, the aim of the tale. Some of the finest tales are tales of ratiocination. Thus the field of this species of composition, if not in so elevated a region on the mountain of Mind, is a table-land of far vaster extent than the domain of the mere poem. Its products are never so rich, but infinitely more numerous, and more appreciable by the mass of mankind. The writer of the prose tale, in short, may bring to his theme a vast variety of modes or inflections of thought and expression—(the ratiocinative, for example, the sarcastic or the humorous) which are not only antagonistical to the nature of the poem, but absolutely forbidden by one of its most peculiar and indispensable adjuncts; we allude, of course, to rhythm. It may be added, here, *par parenthèse*, that the author who aims at the purely beautiful in a prose tale is laboring at great disadvantage. For Beauty can be better treated in the poem. Not so with terror, or passion, or horror, or a multitude of such other points. And here it will be seen how full of prejudice are the usual animadversions against those *tales of effect*, many fine examples of which were found in the earlier numbers of Blackwood. The impressions produced were wrought in a legitimate sphere of action, and constituted a legitimate although sometimes an exaggerated interest. They were relished by every man of genius: although there were found many men of genius who condemned them without just ground. The true critic will but demand that the design intended be accomplished, to the fullest extent, by the means most advantageously applicable.

We have very few American tales of real merit—we may say, indeed, none, with the exception of "The Tales of a Traveller" of Washington Irving, and these "Twice-Told Tales" of Mr. Hawthorne. Some of the pieces of Mr. John Neal abound in vigor and originality; but in general, his compositions of this class are excessively diffuse, extravagant, and indicative of an imperfect sentiment of Art. Articles at random are, now and then, met with in our periodicals which might be advantageously compared with the best effusions of the British Magazines; but, upon the whole, we are far behind our progenitors in this department of literature.

Of Mr. Hawthorne's Tales we would say, emphatically, that they belong to the highest region of Art—an Art subservient to genius of a very lofty order. We had supposed, with good reason for so supposing, that he had been thrust into his present position by one of the impudent *cliques* which beset our literature, and whose pretensions it is our full purpose to expose at the earliest opportunity; but we have been most agreeably mistaken. We know of few compositions which the critic can more honestly commend than these "Twice-Told Tales." As Americans, we feel proud of the book.

Mr. Hawthorne's distinctive trait is invention, creation, imagination, originality—a trait which, in the literature of fiction, is positively worth all the rest. But the nature of originality, so far as regards its manifestation in letters, is but imperfectly understood. The inventive or original mind as frequently displays itself in novelty of *tone* as in novelty of matter. Mr. Hawthorne is original at *all* points.

It would be a matter of some difficulty to designate the best of these tales; we repeat that, without exception, they are beautiful. "Wakefield" is remarkable for the skill with which an old idea—a well-known incident—is worked up or discussed. A man of whims conceives the purpose of quitting his wife and residing *incognito*, for twenty years, in her immediate neighborhood. Something of this kind actually happened in London. The force of Mr. Hawthorne's tale lies in the analysis of the motives which must or might have impelled the husband to such folly, in the first instance, with the possible causes of his perseverance. Upon this thesis a sketch of singular power has been constructed.

"The Wedding Knell" is full of the boldest imagination—an imagination fully controlled by taste. The most captious critic could find no flaw in this production.

"The Minister's Black Veil" is a masterly composition of which the sole defect is that to the rabble its exquisite skill will be *caviare*. The *obvious* meaning of this article will be found to smother its insinuated one. The *moral* put into the mouth of the dying minister will be supposed to convey the *true* import of the narrative; and that a crime of dark dye (having reference to the "young lady") has been committed, is a point which only minds congenial with that of the author will perceive.

"Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" is vividly original and managed most dexterously.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is exceedingly well imagined, and executed with surpassing ability. The artist breathes in every line of it.

"The White Old Maid" is objectionable, even more than the "Minister's Black Veil," on the score of its mysticism. Even with the thoughtful and analytic, there will be much trouble in penetrating its entire import.

"The Hollow of the Three Hills" we would quote in full, had we space;—not as evincing higher talent than any of the other pieces, but as affording an excellent example of the author's peculiar ability. The subject is commonplace. A witch subjects the Distant and the Past to the view of a mourner. It has been the fashion to describe, in such cases, a mirror in which the images of the absent appear; or a cloud of smoke is made to arise, and thence the figures are gradually unfolded. Mr. Hawthorne has wonderfully heightened his effect by making the ear, in place of the eye, the medium by which the fantasy is conveyed. The head of the mourner is enveloped in the cloak of the witch, and within its magic folds there arise sounds which have an all-sufficient intelligence. Throughout this article also, the artist is conspicuous—not more in positive than in negative merits. Not only is all done that should be done, but (what perhaps is an end with more difficulty attained) there is nothing done which should not be. Every word *tells*, and there is not a word which does *not* tell.

In "Howe's Masquerade" we observe something which resembles a plagiarism—but which *may be* a very flattering coincidence of thought. We quote the passage in question.

> "*With a dark flush of wrath* upon his brow they saw the general *draw his sword* and *advance to meet* the figure *in the cloak* before the latter had stepped on pace upon the floor.
>
> "'Villain, *unmuffle yourself*,' cried he, 'you pass no farther!'
>
> "The figure, without blanching a hair's breadth from the sword which was pointed at his breast, made a solemn pause, and lowered the cape of the cloak from his face, yet not sufficiently for the spectators to catch a glimpse of it. But Sir William Howe had evidently seen enough. The sternness of his countenance gave place to a look of wild amazement, if not horror, while he recoiled several steps from the figure, *and let fall his sword* upon the floor."

The idea here is, that the figure in the cloak is the phantom or reduplication of Sir William Howe; but in an article called "William Wilson," one of the "Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque," we have not only the same idea, but the same idea similarly presented in several respects. We quote two paragraphs, which our readers may compare with what has been already given. We have italicized, above, the immeate particulars of resemblance.

> "The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the arrangement at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror, it appeared to me, now stood where none had been perceptible before: and as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, *advanced* with a feeble and tottering gait to meet me.
>
> "Thus it appeared I say, but was not. It was Wilson, who then stood before me in the agonies of dissolution. Not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of that face which was not even identically mine own. *His mask and cloak lay where he had thrown them, upon the floor*."

Here it will be observed that, not only are the two general conceptions identical, but there are various *points* of similarity. In each case the figure seen is the wraith or duplication of the beholder. In each case the scene is a masquerade. In each case the figure is cloaked. In each, there is a quarrel—that is to say, angry words pass between the parties. In each the beholder is enraged. In each the cloak and sword fall upon the floor. The "villain, unmuffle yourself," of Mr. H. is precisely paralleled by a passage at page 56 of "William Wilson."

In the way of objection we have scarcely a word to say of these tales. There is, perhaps, a somewhat too general or prevalent *tone*—a tone of melancholy and mysticism. The subjects are insufficiently varied. There is not so much of *versatility* evinced as we might well be warranted in expecting from the high powers of Mr. Hawthorne. But beyond these trivial exceptions we have really none to make. The style is purity itself. Force abounds. High imagination gleams from every page. Mr. Hawthorne is a man of the truest genius. We only regret that the limits of our Magazine will not permit us to pay him that full tribute of commendation, which, under other circumstances, we should be so eager to pay.

Edgar Allan Poe

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Son cœur est un luth suspendu;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.
Béranger

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was — but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me — upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant, eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees — with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium: the bitter lapse into every-day life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought, which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it — I paused to think — what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression, and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down — but with a shudder even more thrilling than before — upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country — a letter from him — which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said — it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request — which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher"—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy,— a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn; a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction. until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things. I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me in silence through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy,—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this, I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality,— of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely moulded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity,—these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation, that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture;

the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect,—in terror. In this unnerved, in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence for many years he had never ventured forth, in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated,—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit; an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had at length brought about upon the morale of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin,—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which

I can never forget, "would leave him (him, the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing-in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain,—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisation of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphureous lustre over all. His long, improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why,—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light, was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his impromptus could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

I

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago),

And every gentle air that dallied,
  In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
  A wingéd odor went away.

III

Wanderers in that happy valley
  Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
  To a lute's well-tunéd law,
Round about a throne, where sitting,
  Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting,
  The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
  Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
  And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
  Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
  The wit and wisdom of their king.

V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
  Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
  Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And, round about his home, the glory
  That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
  Of the old time entombed.

VI

And travelers now within that valley
  Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
  To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
  Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
  And laugh — but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty (for other men[1] have thought thus) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones,— in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around; above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence — the evidence of the sentience — was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had moulded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him, — what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books — the books which for years had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid — were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the Ververt and Chartreuse of Gresset; the Belphegor of Machiavelli; the Heaven and Hell of Swedenborg; the Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg; the Chiromancy of

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[1] Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Landaff.—See "Chemical Essays," Vol. V.

Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and of De la Chambre; the Journey into the Blue Distance of Tieck; and the City of the Sun of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum*, by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic, — the manual of a forgotten church,— the *Vigiliæ Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiæ Maguntinæ.*

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been also similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue, but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much if not all of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room,—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes,—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence,—"you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity, for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not — you shall not behold this!" said I shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon — or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen; — and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the "Mad Trist" of Sir Launcelot Canning; but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild, overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:

> And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings

of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now, pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest.

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been in its exact similarity of character the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:

But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten:

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard.

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement, for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound,—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast; yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea, for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:

> And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound.

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips than — as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver — I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it, yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher! There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and, in her violent and now final death agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber and from that mansion I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long, tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "*House of Usher*."

Edgar Allan Poe

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian *millionnaires*. In painting and gemmary Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack, but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially; I was skilful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him, that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him—"My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival?"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—"

"Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi—"

"I have no engagement; come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are incrusted with nitre."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon; and as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a *roquelaure* closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honour of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing: it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mould.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are imbedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The nitre!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flacon of De Grave. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said, "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my *roquelaure*.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depths of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the masonwork, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamoured. I re-echoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamourer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognising as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo, the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"*For the love of God, Montresor!*"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again—

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labour. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat!*

Edgar Allan Poe

THE PURLOINED LETTER

Nil sapientiæ odiosius acumine nimio.
SENECA

At Paris, just after dark one gusty evening in the autumn of 18—, I was enjoying the twofold luxury of meditation and a meerschaum, in company with my friend C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or book-closet, *au troisième*, No. 33 Rue Donot, Faubourg St. Germain. For one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence; while each, to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occupied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. For myself, however, I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Rogêt. I looked upon it, therefore, as something of a coincidence, when the door of our apartment was thrown open and admitted our old acquaintance, Monsieur G——, the Prefect of the Parisian police.

We gave him a hearty welcome; for there was nearly half as much of the entertaining as of the contemptible about the man, and we had not seen him for several years. We had been sitting in the dark, and Dupin now arose for the purpose of lighting a lamp, but sat down again, without doing so, upon G——'s saying that he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend, about some official business which had occasioned a great deal of trouble.

"If it is any point requiring reflection," observed Dupin, as he forebore to enkindle the wick, "we shall examine it to better purpose in the dark."

"That is another of your odd notions," said the Prefect, who had a fashion of calling everything "odd" that was beyond his comprehension, and thus lived amid an absolute legion of "oddities."

"Very true," said Dupin, as he supplied his visitor with a pipe, and rolled towards him a comfortable chair.

"And what is the difficulty now?" I asked. "Nothing more in the assassination way, I hope?"

"Oh no; nothing of that nature. The fact is, the business is *very* simple indeed, and I make no doubt that we can manage it sufficiently well ourselves; but then I thought Dupin would like to hear the details of it, because it is so excessively *odd*."

"Simple and odd," said Dupin.

"Why, yes; and not exactly that either. The fact is, we have all been a good deal puzzled because the affair *is* so simple, and yet baffles us altogether."

"Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault," said my friend.

"What nonsense you *do* talk!" replied the Prefect, laughing heartily.

"Perhaps the mystery is a little too plain," said Dupin.

"Oh, good heavens! who ever heard of such an idea?"

"A little *too* self-evident."

"Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!" roared our visitor, profoundly amused. "Oh, Dupin, you will be the death of me yet!"

"And what, after all, *is* the matter on hand?" I asked.

"Why, I will tell you," replied the Prefect, as he gave a long, steady, and contemplative puff, and settled himself in his chair. "I will tell you in a few words; but, before I begin, let me caution you that this is an affair demanding the greatest secrecy, and that I should most probably lose the position I now hold were it known that I confided it to any one."

"Proceed," said I.

"Or not," said Dupin.

"Well, then; I have received personal information, from a very high quarter, that a certain document of the last importance has been purloined from the royal apartments. The individual who purloined it is known; this beyond a doubt; he was seen to take it. It is known, also, that it still remains in his possession."

"How is this known?" asked Dupin.

"It is clearly inferred," replied the Prefect, "from the nature of the document, and from the non-appearance of certain results which would at once arise from its passing *out* of the robber's possession;—that is to say, from his employing it as he must design in the end to employ it."

"Be a little more explicit," I said.

"Well, I may venture so far as to say that the paper gives its holder a certain power in a certain quarter where such power is immensely valuable." The Prefect was fond of the cant of diplomacy.

"Still I do not quite understand," said Dupin.

"No? Well; the disclosure of the document to a third person who shall be nameless would bring in question the honour of a personage of most exalted station; and this fact gives the holder of the document an ascendency over the illustrious personage whose honor and peace are so jeopardized."

"But this ascendency," I interposed, "would depend upon the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber. Who would dare"—

"The thief," said G——, "is the Minister D——, who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a man. The method of the theft was not less ingenious than bold. The document in question—a letter, to be frank—had been received by the personage robbed while alone in the royal *boudoir*. During its perusal she was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the other exalted personage from whom especially it was her wish to conceal it. After a hurried and vain endeavor to thrust it in a drawer, she was forced to place it, open as it was, upon a table. The address, however, was uppermost, and the contents thus unexposed, the letter escaped notice. At this juncture enters the Minister D——. His lynx eye immediately perceives the paper, recognises the handwriting of the address, observes the confusion of the personage addressed, and fathoms her secret. After some business transactions, hurried through in his ordinary manner, he produces a letter somewhat similar to the one in question, opens it, pretends to read it, and then places it in close juxtaposition to the other. Again he converses for some fifteen minutes upon the public affairs. At length, in taking leave, he takes also from the table the letter to which he had no claim. Its rightful owner saw, but of course dared not call attention to the act, in the presence of the third personage who stood at her elbow. The minister decamped; leaving his own letter—one of no importance—upon the table."

"Here, then," said Dupin to me, "you have precisely what you demand to make the ascendency complete—the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber."

"Yes," replied the Prefect; "and the power thus attained has, for some months past, been wielded for political purposes to a very dangerous extent. The personage robbed is more thoroughly convinced every day of the necessity of reclaiming her letter. But this of course cannot be done openly. In fine, driven to despair, she has committed the matter to me."

"Than whom," said Dupin, amid a perfect whirlwind of smoke, "no more sagacious agent could, I suppose, be desired, or even imagined."

"You flatter me," replied the Prefect; "but it is possible that some such opinion may have been entertained."

"It is clear," said I, "as you observe, that the letter is still in possession of the minister; since it is this possession, and not any employment of the letter, which bestows the power. With the employment the power departs."

"True," said G——; "and upon this conviction I proceeded. My first care was to make thorough search of the minister's hotel; and here my chief embarrassment lay in the necessity of searching without his knowledge. Beyond all things, I have been warned of the danger which would result from giving him reason to suspect our design."

"But," said I, "you are quite *au fait* in these investigations. The Parisian police have done this thing often before."

"Oh, yes; and for this reason I did not despair. The habits of the minister gave me, too, a great advantage. He is frequently absent from home all night. His servants are by no means numerous. They sleep at a distance from their master's apartment, and, being chiefly Neapolitans, are readily made drunk. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any chamber or cabinet in Paris. For three months a night has not passed, during the greater part of which I have not been engaged, personally, in ransacking the D—— Hotel. My honour is interested, and, to mention a great secret, the reward is enormous. So I did not abandon the search until I had become fully satisfied that the thief is a more astute man than myself. I fancy that I have investigated every nook and corner of the premises in which it is possible that the paper can be concealed."

"But is it not possible," I suggested, "that although the letter may be in possession of the minister, as it unquestionably is, he may have concealed it elsewhere than upon his own premises?"

"This is barely possible," said Dupin. "The present peculiar condition of affairs at court, and especially of those intrigues in which D—— is known to be involved, would render the instant availability of the document—its susceptibility of being produced at a moment's notice—a point of nearly equal importance with its possession."

"Its susceptibility of being produced?" said I.

"That is to say of being *destroyed*," said Dupin.

"True," I observed; "the paper is clearly then upon the premises. As for its being upon the person of the minister, we may consider that as out of the question."

"Entirely," said the Prefect. "He has been twice waylaid, as if by footpads, and his person rigorously searched under my own inspection."

"You might have spared yourself this trouble," said Dupin. "D——, I presume, is not altogether a fool, and, if not, must have anticipated these waylayings as a matter of course."

"Not *altogether* a fool," said G——; "but then he's a poet, which I take to be only one remove from a fool."

"True," said Dupin, after a long and thoughtful whiff from his meerschaum, "although I have been guilty of certain doggerel myself."

"Suppose you detail," said I, "the particulars of your search."

"Why, the fact is, we took our time, and we searched *everywhere*. I have had long experience in these affairs. I took the entire building, room by room; devoting the nights of a whole week to each. We examined, first, the furniture of each apartment. We opened every possible drawer; and I presume you know that, to a properly trained police-agent, such a thing as a *secret* drawer is impossible. Any man is a dolt who permits a 'secret' drawer to escape him in a search of this kind. The thing is *so* plain. There is a certain amount of bulk—of space—to be accounted for in every cabinet. Then we have accurate rules. The fiftieth part of a line could not escape us. After the cabinets we took the chairs. The cushions we probed with the fine long needles you have seen me employ. From the tables we removed the tops."

"Why so?"

"Sometimes the top of a table, or other similarly arranged piece of furniture, is removed by the person wishing to conceal an article; then the leg is excavated, the article deposited within the cavity, and the top replaced. The bottoms and tops of bedposts are employed in the same way."

"But could not the cavity be detected by sounding?" I asked.

"By no means, if, when the article is deposited, a sufficient wadding of cotton be placed around it. Besides, in our case, we were obliged to proceed without noise."

"But you could not have removed—you could not have taken to pieces *all* articles of furniture in which it would have been possible to make a deposit in the manner you mention. A letter may be compressed into a thin spiral roll, not differing much in shape or bulk from a large knitting-needle, and in this form it might be inserted into the rung of a chair, for example. You did not take to pieces all the chairs?"

"Certainly not; but we did better—we examined the rungs of every chair in the hotel, and indeed, the jointings of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Had there been any traces of recent disturbance we should not have failed to detect it instantly. A single grain of gimlet-dust, for example, would have been as obvious as an apple. Any disorder in the glueing—any unusual gaping in the joints—would have sufficed to insure detection."

"I presume you looked to the mirrors, between the boards and the plates, and you probed the beds and the bedclothes, as well as the curtains and carpets?"

"That, of course; and when we had absolutely completed every particle of the furniture in this way, then we examined the house itself. We divided its entire surface into compartments, which we numbered, so that none might be missed; then we scrutinised each individual square inch throughout the premises, including the two houses immediately adjoining, with the microscope, as before."

"The two houses adjoining?" I exclaimed; "you must have had a great deal of trouble."

"We had; but the reward offered is prodigious."

"You include the *grounds* about the houses?"

"All the grounds are paved with brick. They gave us comparatively little trouble. We examined the moss between the bricks, and found it undisturbed."

"You looked among D——'s papers, of course, and into the books of the library?"

"Certainly; we opened every package and parcel; we not only opened every book, but we turned over every leaf in each volume, not contenting ourselves with a mere shake, according to the fashion of some of our police-officers. We also measured the thickness of every book-*cover*, with the most accurate admeasurement, and applied to each the most jealous scrutiny of the microscope. Had any of the bindings been recently meddled with, it would have been utterly impossible that the fact should have escaped observation. Some five or six volumes, just from the hands of the binder, we carefully probed, longitudinally, with the needles."

"You explored the floors beneath the carpets?"

"Beyond doubt. We removed every carpet, and examined the boards with the microscope."

"And the paper on the walls?"

"Yes."

"You looked into the cellars?"

"We did."

"Then," I said, "you have been making a miscalculation, and the letter is *not* upon the premises, as you suppose."

"I fear you are right there," said the Prefect. "And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to do?"

"To make a thorough re-search of the premises."

"That is absolutely needless," replied G——. "I am not more sure that I breathe than I am that the letter is not at the hotel."

"I have no better advice to give you," said Dupin. "You have, of course, an accurate description of the letter?"

"Oh yes!"—And here the Prefect, producing a memorandum-book, proceeded to read aloud a minute account of the internal, and especially of the external, appearance of the missing document. Soon after finishing the perusal of this description, he took his departure, more entirely depressed in spirits than I had ever known the good gentleman before.

In about a month afterwards he paid us another visit, and found us occupied very nearly as before. He took a pipe and a chair and entered into some ordinary conversation. At length I said,

"Well, but G——, what of the purloined letter? I presume you have at last made up your mind that there is no such thing as overreaching the minister?"

"Confound him, say I—yes; I made the re-examination, however, as Dupin suggested—but it was all labour lost, as I knew it would be."

"How much was the reward offered, did you say?" asked Dupin.

"Why, a very great deal—a *very* liberal reward—I don't like to say how much, precisely; but one thing I *will* say, that I would n't mind giving my individual cheque for fifty thousand francs to any one who could obtain me that letter. The fact is, it is becoming of more and more importance every day; and the reward has been lately doubled. If it were trebled, however, I could do no more than I have done."

"Why, yes," said Dupin, drawlingly, between the whiffs of his meerschaum, "I really—think, G——, you have not exerted yourself—to the utmost in this matter. You might —do a little more, I think, eh?"

"How?—in what way?"

"Why—puff, puff—you might—puff, puff—employ counsel in the matter, eh?—puff, puff, puff. Do you remember the story they tell of Abernethy?"

"No; hang Abernethy!"

"To be sure! hang him and welcome. But, once upon a time, a certain rich miser conceived the design of sponging upon this Abernethy for a medical opinion. Getting up, for this purpose, an ordinary conversation in a private company, he insinuated his case to the physician as that of an imaginary individual.

" 'We will suppose,' said the miser, 'that his symptoms are such and such; now, doctor, what would *you* have directed him to take?'

" 'Take!' said Abernethy, 'why, take *advice*, to be sure.' "

"But," said the Prefect, a little discomposed, "I am *perfectly* willing to take advice, and to pay for it. I would *really* give fifty thousand francs to anybody who would aid me in the matter."

"In that case," replied Dupin, opening a drawer, and producing a cheque-book, "you may as well fill me up a cheque for the amount mentioned. When you have signed it, I will hand you the letter."

I was astounded. The Prefect appeared absolutely thunder-stricken. For some minutes he remained speechless and motionless, looking incredulously at my friend with open mouth, and eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; then, apparently recovering himself in some measure, he seized a pen, and after several pauses and vacant stares, finally filled up and signed a cheque for fifty thousand francs and handed it across the table to Dupin. The latter examined it carefully and deposited it in his pocket-book; then, unlocking an *escritoire*, took thence a letter and gave it to the Prefect. This functionary grasped it in a perfect agony of joy, opened it with a trembling hand, cast a rapid glance at its contents, and then scrambling and struggling to the door, rushed at length unceremoniously from the room and from the house, without having uttered a syllable since Dupin had requested him to fill up the cheque.

When he had gone my friend entered into some explanations.

"The Parisian police," he said, "are exceedingly able in their way. They are persevering, ingenious, cunning, and thoroughly versed in the knowledge which their duties seem chiefly to demand. Thus, when G—— detailed to us his mode of searching the premises at the Hotel D——, I felt entire confidence in his having made a satisfactory investigation—so far as his labours extended."

"So far as his labours extended?" said I.

"Yes," said Dupin. "The measures adopted were not only the best of their kind, but carried out to absolute perfection. Had the letter been deposited within the range of their search, these fellows would, beyond question, have found it."

I merely laughed, but he seemed quite serious in all that he said.

"The measures, then," he continued, "were good in their kind, and well executed; their defect lay in their being inapplicable to the case, and to the man. A certain set of highly ingenious resources are with the Prefect a sort of Procrustean bed, to which he forcibly adapts his designs. But he perpetually errs by being too deep or too shallow for the matter in hand, and many a schoolboy is a better reasoner than he. I knew one about eight years of age, whose success at guessing in the game of 'even and odd' attracted universal admiration. This game is simple, and is played with marbles. One player holds in his hand a number of these toys, and demands of another whether that number is even or odd. If the guess is right the guesser wins one; if wrong, he loses one. The boy to whom I allude won all the marbles of the school. Of course he had some principle of guessing, and this lay in mere observation and admeasurement of the astuteness of his opponents. For example, an arrant simpleton is his opponent, and holding up his closed hand asks, 'are they even or odd?' Our schoolboy replies 'Odd,' and loses, but upon the second trial he wins, for he then says to himself, 'the simpleton had them even upon the first trial, and his amount of cunning is just sufficient to make him have them odd upon the second, I will therefore guess odd'; he guesses odd, and wins. Now with a simpleton a degree above the first he would have reasoned thus: 'This fellow finds that in the first instance I guessed odd, and in the second he will propose to himself upon the first impulse, a simple variation from even to odd, as did the first simpleton, but then a second thought will suggest that this is too simple a variation, and finally he will decide upon putting it even as before. I will therefore guess even'; he guesses even, and wins. Now this mode of reasoning in the schoolboy, whom his fellows termed 'lucky,' what in its last analysis is it?"

"It is merely," I said, "an identification of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent."

"It is," said Dupin, "and upon inquiring of the boy by what means he effected the *thorough* identification in which his success consisted, I received answer as follows: 'When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face as accurately as possible in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression.' This response of the schoolboy lies at the bottom of all the spurious profundity which has been attributed to Rochefoucauld, to La Bruyère, to Machiavelli, and to Campanella."

"And the identification," I said, "of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponents depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the opponent's intellect is admeasured."

"For its practical value it depends upon this," replied Dupin, "and the Prefect and his cohort fail so frequently, first, by default of this identification, and secondly, by ill-admeasurement, or rather through non-admeasurement of the intellect with which they are engaged. They consider only their *own* ideas of ingenuity; and, in searching for anything hidden, advert only to the modes in which *they* would have hidden it. They are right in this much—that their own ingenuity is a faithful representative of that of *the mass;* but when the cunning of the individual felon is diverse in character from their own, the felon foils them of course. This always happens when it is above their own, and very usually when it is below. They have no variation of principle in their investigations; at best, when urged by some unusual emergency, by some extraordinary reward, they extend or exaggerate their old modes of *practice*, without touching their principles. What, for example, in this case of D—— has been done to vary the principle of action? What is all this boring, and probing, and sounding, and scrutinising with the microscope, and dividing the surface of the building into registered square inches—what is it all but an exaggeration *of the application* of the one principle or set of principles of search, which are based upon the one set of notions regarding human ingenuity, to which the Prefect in the long routine of his duty has been accustomed? Do you not see he has taken it for granted that *all* men proceed to conceal a letter—not exactly in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair-leg—but, at least, in *some* out-of-the-way hole or corner suggested by the same tenor of thought which would urge a man to secrete a letter in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair-leg? And do you not see also that such *recherchés* nooks for concealment are adapted only for ordinary occasions, and would be adopted only by ordinary intellects, for, in all cases of concealment, a disposal of the article concealed, a disposal of it in this *recherché* manner, is in the very first instance presumable and presumed, and thus its discovery depends, not at all upon the acumen, but altogether upon the mere care, patience, and determination of the seekers, and where the case is of importance, or what amounts to the same thing in the policial eyes, when the reward is of magnitude, the qualities in question have *never* been known to fail? You will now understand what I meant in suggesting that had the purloined letter been hidden anywhere within the limits of the Prefect's examination—in other words, had the principle of its concealment been comprehended within the principles of the Prefect, its discovery would have been a matter altogether beyond question. This functionary, however, has been thoroughly mystified, and the remote source of his defeat lies in the supposition that the minister is a fool because he has acquired renown as a poet. All fools are poets, this the Prefect *feels*, and he is merely guilty of a *non distributio medii* in thence inferring that all poets are fools."

"But is this really the poet?" I asked. "There are two brothers, I know, and both have attained reputation in letters. The minister, I believe, has written learnedly on the Differential Calculus. He is a mathematician and no poet."

"You are mistaken; I know him well; he is both. As poet *and* mathematician he would reason well; as mere mathematician he could not have reasoned at all, and thus would have been at the mercy of the Prefect."

"You surprise me," I said, "by these opinions, which have been contradicted by the voice of the world. You do not mean to set at naught the well-digested idea of centuries. The mathematical reason has long been regarded as *the* reason *par excellence*."

" '*Il y a à parier*,' " replied Dupin, quoting from Chamfort, " '*que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenu au plus grand nombre*.' The mathematicians, I grant you, have done their best to promulgate the popular error to which you allude, and which is none the less an error for its promulgation as truth. With an art worthy a better cause, for example, they have insinuated the term 'analysis' into application to algebra. The French are the originators of this particular deception, but if a term is of any importance, if words derive any value from applicability, then 'analysis' conveys 'algebra' about as much as, in Latin, '*ambitus*' implies 'ambition,' '*religio*' 'religion,' or '*homines honesti*' a set of *honourable* men."

"You have a quarrel on hand, I see," said I, "with some of the algebraists of Paris—but proceed."

"I dispute the availability, and thus the value of that reason which is cultivated in any especial form other than the abstractly logical. I dispute in particular the reason educed by mathematical study. The mathematics are the science of form and quantity, mathematical reasoning is merely logic applied to observation upon form and quantity. The great error lies in supposing that even the truths of what is called *pure* algebra are abstract or general truths. And this error is so egregious that I am confounded at the universality with which it has been received. Mathematical axioms are *not* axioms of general truth. What is true of *relation*—of form and quantity—is often grossly false in regard to morals, for example. In this latter science it is very usually *un*true that the aggregated parts are equal to the whole. In chemistry also the axiom fails. In the consideration of motive it fails, for two motives, each of a given value, have not necessarily a value when united equal to the sum of their values apart. There are numerous other mathematical truths which are only truths within the limits of *relation*. But the mathematician argues from his *finite truths*, through habit, as if they were of an absolutely general applicability—as the world indeed imagines them to be. Bryant, in his very learned Mythology, mentions an analogous source of error, when he says that 'although the Pagan fables are not believed, yet we forget ourselves continually, and make inferences from them as existing realities.' With the algebraists, however, who are Pagans themselves, the 'Pagan fables' *are* believed, and the inferences are made, not so much through lapse of memory as through an unaccountable addling of the brains. In short, I never yet encountered the mere mathematician who could be trusted out of equal roots, or one who did not clandestinely hold it as a point of his faith that x^2+px was absolutely and unconditionally equal to q. Say to one of these gentlemen, by way of experiment, if you please, that you believe occasions may occur where x^2+px is *not* altogether equal to q, and having made him understand what you mean, get out of his reach as speedily as convenient, for beyond doubt he will endeavor to knock you down.

"I mean to say," continued Dupin, while I merely laughed at his last observations, "that if the minister had been no more than a mathematician, the Prefect would have been under no necessity of giving me this cheque. I knew him, however, as both mathematician and poet, and my measures were adapted to his capacity, with reference to the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I knew him as courtier, too, and as a bold *intrigant.* Such a man, I considered, could not fail to be aware of the ordinary policial modes of action. He could not have failed to anticipate—and events have proved that he did not fail to anticipate—the waylayings to which he was subjected. He must have foreseen, I reflected, the secret investigations of his premises. His frequent absences from home at night, which were hailed by the Prefect as certain aids to his success, I regarded only as *ruses*, to afford opportunity for thorough search to the police, and thus the sooner to impress them with the conviction to which G——, in fact, did finally arrive—the conviction that the letter was not upon the premises. I felt, also, that the whole train of thought which I was at some pains in detailing to you just now, concerning the invariable principle of policial action in searches for articles concealed—I felt that this whole train of thought would necessarily pass through the mind of the minister. It would imperatively lead him to despise all the ordinary *nooks* of concealment. *He* could not, I reflected, be so weak as not to see that the most intricate and remote recess of his hotel would be as open as his commonest closets to the eyes, to the probes, to the gimlets, and to the microscopes of the Prefect. I saw, in fine, that he would be driven, as a matter of course, to *simplicity*, if not deliberately induced to it as a matter of choice. You will remember, perhaps, how desperately the Prefect laughed when I suggested, upon our first interview, that it was just possible this mystery troubled him so much on account of its being so *very* self-evident."

"Yes," said I, "I remember his merriment well. I really thought he would have fallen into convulsions."

"The material world," continued Dupin, "abounds with very strict analogies to the immaterial; and thus some colour of truth has been given to the rhetorical dogma that metaphor or simile may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertiæ*, for example, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true in the former that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent *momentum* is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more eventful in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and more embarrassed and full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress. Again; have you ever noticed which of the street signs over the shop-doors are the most attractive of attention?"

"I have never given the matter a thought," I said.

"There is a game of puzzles," he resumed, "which is played upon a map. One party playing requires another to find a given word—the name of town, river, state, or empire—any word, in short, upon the motley and perplexed surface of the chart. A novice in the game generally seeks to embarrass his opponents by giving them the most minutely lettered names, but the adept selects such words as stretch, in large characters, from one end of the chart to the other. These, like the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street, escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious; and here the physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. But this is a point, it appears, somewhat above or beneath the understanding of the Prefect. He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world, by way of best preventing any portion of that world from perceiving it.

"But the more I reflected upon the daring, dashing, and discriminating ingenuity of D——; upon the fact that the document must always have been *at hand* if he intended to use it to good purpose; and upon the decisive evidence, obtained by the Prefect, that it was not hidden within the limits of that dignitary's ordinary search—the more satisfied I became that, to conceal this letter, the minister had resorted to the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all.

"Full of these ideas, I prepared myself with a pair of green spectacles, and called one fine morning, quite by accident, at the ministerial hotel. I found D—— at home, yawning, lounging, and dawdling, as usual, and pretending to be in the last extremity of *ennui*. He is, perhaps, the most really energetic human being now alive—but that is only when nobody sees him.

"To be even with him, I complained of my weak eyes, and lamented the necessity of the spectacles, under cover of which I cautiously and thoroughly surveyed the whole apartment, while seemingly intent only upon the conversation of my host.

"I paid especial attention to a large writing-table near which he sat, and upon which lay confusedly some miscellaneous letters and other papers, with one or two musical instruments and a few books. Here, however, after a long and very deliberate scrutiny, I saw nothing to excite particular suspicion.

"At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the room, fell upon a trumpery filigree card-rack of paste-board that hung dangling by a dirty blue ribbon from a little brass knob just beneath the middle of the mantelpiece. In this rack, which had three or four compartments, were five or six visiting cards and a solitary letter. This last was much soiled and crumpled. It was torn nearly in two, across the middle—as if a design, in the first instance, to tear it entirely up as worthless, had been altered, or stayed, in the second. It had a large black seal, bearing the D—— cipher *very* conspicuously, and was addressed, in a diminutive female hand, to D——, the minister, himself. It was thrust carelessly, and even, as it seemed, contemptuously, into one of the uppermost divisions of the rack.

"No sooner had I glanced at this letter than I concluded it to be that of which I was in search. To be sure, it was to all appearance radically different from the one of which the Prefect had read us so minute a description. Here the seal was large and black, with the D—— cipher; there it was small and red, with the ducal arms of the S—— family. Here the address, to the minister, was diminutive and feminine; there the superscription, to a certain royal personage, was markedly bold and decided: the size alone formed a point of correspondence. But, then, the *radicalness* of these differences, which was excessive; the dirt; the soiled and torn condition of the paper, so inconsistent with the *true* methodical habits of D——, and so suggestive of a design to delude the beholder into an idea of the worthlessness of the document; these things, together with the hyper-obtrusive situation of this document, full in the view of every visitor, and thus exactly in accordance with the conclusions to which I had previously arrived: these things, I say, were strongly corroborative of suspicion in one who came with the intention to suspect.

"I protracted my visit as long as possible, and while I maintained a most animated discussion with the minister, upon a topic which I knew well had never failed to interest and excite him, I kept my attention really riveted upon the letter. In this examination I committed to memory its external appearance and arrangement in the rack; and also fell, at length, upon a discovery which set at rest whatever trivial doubt I might have entertained. In scrutinizing the edges of the paper I observed them to be more *chafed* than seemed necessary. They presented the *broken* appearance which is manifested when a stiff paper, having been once folded and pressed with a folder, is refolded in a reversed direction, in the same creases or edges which had formed the original fold. This discovery was sufficient. It was clear to me that the letter had been turned as a glove, inside out, re-directed and re-sealed. I bade the minister good morning and took my departure at once, leaving a gold snuff-box upon the table.

"The next morning I called for the snuff-box, when we resumed quite eagerly the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a terrified mob. D—— rushed to a casement, threw it open and looked out. In the meantime I stepped to the card-rack, took the letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a *facsimile* (so far as regards externals), which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings—imitating the D—— cipher very readily by means of a seal formed of bread.

"The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by the frantic behaviour of a man with a musket. He had fired it among a crowd of women and children. It proved, however, to have been without ball, and the fellow was suffered to go his way as a lunatic or a drunkard. When he had gone, D—— came from the window, whither I had followed him immediately upon securing the object in view. Soon afterwards I bade him farewell. The pretended lunatic was a man in my own pay."

"But what purpose had you," I asked, "in replacing the letter by a *facsimile?* Would it not have been better at the first visit to have seized it openly, and departed?"

"D——," replied Dupin, "is a desperate man and a man of nerve. His hotel, too, is not without attendants devoted to his interests. Had I made the wild attempt you suggest I might never have left the ministerial presence alive. The good people of Paris might have heard of me no more. But I had an object apart from these considerations. You know my political prepossessions. In this matter, I act as a partisan of the lady concerned. For eighteen months the minister has had her in his power. She has now him in hers—since, being unaware that the letter is not in his possession, he will proceed with his exactions as if it was. Thus will he inevitably commit himself at once to his political destruction. His downfall, too, will not be more precipitate than awkward. It is all very well to talk about the *facilis descensus Averni*, but in all kinds of climbing, as Catalani said of singing, it is far more easy to get up than to come down. In the present instance I have no sympathy—at least no pity—for him who descends. He is that *monstrum horrendum*, an unprincipled man of genius. I confess, however, that I should like very well to know the precise character of his thoughts, when, being defied by her whom the Prefect terms 'a certain personage,' he is reduced to opening the letter which I left for him in the card-rack."

"How? did you put anything particular in it?"

"Why—it did not seem altogether right to leave the interior blank—that would have been insulting. D——, at

Vienna, once did me an evil turn, which I told him, quite good-humoredly, that I should remember. So, as I knew he would feel some curiosity in regard to the identity of the person who had outwitted him, I thought it a pity not to give him a clue. He is well acquainted with my MS., and I just copied into the middle of the blank sheet the words—

> '—Un dessein si funeste,
> S'il n'est digne d' Atrée, est digne de Thyeste.'

They are to be found in Crébillon's Atrée."

Edgar Allan Poe

TO SCIENCE

A PROLOGUE TO "AL AARAAF"

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art,
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jeweled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car,
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

Edgar Allan Poe

TO HELEN

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicéan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

Edgar Allan Poe

ISRAFEL

And the angel Israfel, whose heartstrings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures. KORAN

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven),
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre

By which he sits and sings,
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest:
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit:
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervor of thy lute:
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

Edgar Allan Poe

ULALUME

The skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crispèd and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll,
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year,
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber,
(Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn,

As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs,
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies,
To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!

Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming
With hope and in beauty to-night:-
See,—it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'T is the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispèd and sere,
As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here,
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

Edgar Allan Poe

ELDORADO

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old,
This knight so bold,
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow;
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be,
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,—
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

Edgar Allan Poe

Henry Timrod (1829-1867)

STORM AND CALM

Sweet are these kisses of the South,
As dropped from woman's rosiest mouth,
And tenderer are those azure skies
Than this world's tenderest pair of eyes!

But ah! beneath such influence
Thought is too often lost in Sense;
And Action, faltering as we thrill,
Sinks in the unnerved arms of Will.

Awake, thou stormy North, and blast
The subtle spells around us cast;
Beat from our limbs these flowery chains
With the sharp scourges of thy rains!

Bring with thee from thy Polar cave
All the wild songs of wind and wave,
Of toppling berg and grinding floe,
And the dread avalanche of snow!

Wrap us in Arctic night and clouds!
Yell like a fiend amid the shrouds
Of some slow-sinking vessel, when
He hears the shrieks of drowning men!

Blend in thy mighty voice whate'er
Of danger, terror, and despair
Thou hast encountered in thy sweep
Across the land and o'er the deep.

Pour in our ears all notes of woe,
That, as these very moments flow,

Rise like a harsh discordant psalm,
While we lie here in tropic calm.

Sting our weak hearts with bitter shame,
Bear us along with thee like flame;
And prove that even to destroy
More God-like may be than to toy
And rust or rot in idle joy!

Henry Timrod

CAROLINA

I

The despot treads thy sacred sands,
Thy pines give shelter to his bands,
Thy sons stand by with idle hands,
Carolina!
He breathes at ease thy airs of balm,
He scorns the lances of thy palm;
Oh! who shall break thy craven calm,
Carolina!
Thy ancient fame is growing dim,
A spot is on thy garment's rim;
Give to the winds thy battle hymn,
Carolina!

II

Call on thy children of the hill,
Wake swamp and river, coast and rill,
Rouse all thy strength and all thy skill,
Carolina!
Cite wealth and science, trade and art,
Touch with thy fire the cautious mart,
And pour thee through the people's heart,
Carolina!
Till even the coward spurns his fears,
And all thy fields and fens and meres
Shall bristle like thy palm with spears,
Carolina!

III

Hold up the glories of thy dead;
Say how thy elder children bled,
And point to Eutaw's battle-bed,
Carolina!
Tell how the patriot's soul was tried,
And what his dauntless breast defied;
How Rutledge ruled and Laurens died,
Carolina!
Cry! till thy summons, heard at last,
Shall fall like Marion's bugle-blast
Re-echoed from the haunted Past,
Carolina!

IV

I hear a murmur as of waves
That grope their way through sunless caves,
Like bodies struggling in their graves,
Carolina!
And now it deepens; slow and grand
It swells, as, rolling to the land,
An ocean broke upon thy strand,
Carolina!
Shout! let it reach the startled Huns!
And roar with all thy festal guns!
It is the answer of thy sons,
Carolina!

V

They will not wait to hear thee call;
From Sachem's Head to Sumter's wall
Resounds the voice of hut and hall,
Carolina!
No! thou hast not a stain, they say,
Or none save what the battle-day
Shall wash in seas of blood away,
Carolina!

Thy skirts indeed the foe may part,
Thy robe be pierced with sword and dart,
They shall not touch thy noble heart,
Carolina!

VI

Ere thou shalt own the tyrant's thrall
Ten times ten thousand men must fall;
Thy corpse may hearken to his call,
Carolina!
When, by thy bier, in mournful throngs
The women chant thy mortal wrongs,
'Twill be their own funereal songs,
Carolina!
From thy dead breast by ruffians trod
No helpless child shall look to God;
All shall be safe beneath thy sod,
Carolina!

VII

Girt with such wills to do and bear,
Assured in right, and mailed in prayer,
Thou wilt not bow thee to despair,
Carolina!
Throw thy bold banner to the breeze!
Front with thy ranks the threatening seas
Like thine own proud armorial trees,
Carolina!
Fling down thy gauntlet to the Huns,
And roar the challenge from thy guns;
Then leave the future to thy sons,
Carolina!

Henry Timrod

SPRING

Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom
And soon will burst their tomb.

Already, here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,

Small as might deck, upon a gala day,
The forehead of a fay.

In gardens you may note, amid the dearth,
The crocus breaking earth;
And, near the snowdrop's tender white and green
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows need must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await,
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start
If from a beech's heart
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say
"Behold me! I am May!"

Ah! who would couple thoughts of war and crime
With such a blessed time!
Who in the west wind's aromatic breath
Could hear the call of Death!

Yet not more surely shall the Spring awake
The voice of wood and brake
Than she shall rouse, for all her tranquil charms,
A million men to arms.

There shall be deeper hues upon her plains
Than all her sunlit rains,
And every gladdening influence around,
Can summon from the ground.

Oh! standing on this desecrated mold,
Methinks that I behold,
Lifting her bloody daisies up to God,
Spring kneeling on the sod,

And calling, with the voice of all her rills,
Upon the ancient hills
To fall and crush the tyrants and the slaves
Who turn her meads to graves.

Henry Timrod

ODE

SUNG ON THE OCCASION OF DECORATING THE GRAVES OF THE CONFEDERATE DEAD AT MAGNOLIA CEMETERY, CHARLESTON, S.C., 1867

I

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
Though yet no marble column craves
The pilgrim here to pause

II

In seeds of laurel in the earth
The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
The shaft is in the stone!

III

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
Which keep in trust your storied tombs,

Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
  And these memorial blooms.

IV

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
  More proudly on these wreaths to-day,
Than when some cannon-moulded pile
  Shall overlook this bay.

V

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
  There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
  By mourning beauty crowned!

Henry Timrod

Paul Hamilton Hayne (1830-1886)

LYRIC OF ACTION

'Tis the part of a coward to brood
O'er the past that is withered and dead:
What though the heart's roses are ashes and dust?
What though the heart's music be fled?
Still shine the grand heavens o'erhead,
Whence the voice of an angel thrills clear on the soul,
"Gird about thee thine armor, press on to the goal!"

If the faults or the crimes of thy youth
Are a burden too heavy to bear,
What hope can rebloom on the desolate waste
Of a jealous and craven despair?
Down, down with the fetters of fear!
In the strength of thy valor and manhood arise,
With the faith that illumes and the will that defies.

"*Too late!*" through God's infinite world,
From His throne to life's nethermost fires,
"*Too late!*" is a phantom that flies at the dawn
Of the soul that repents and aspires.
If pure thou hast made thy desires,
There's no height the strong wings of immortals may gain
Which in striving to reach thou shalt strive for in vain.

Then, up to the contest with fate,
Unbound by the past which is dead!
What though the heart's roses are ashes and dust?
What though the heart's music be fled?
Still shine the fair heavens o'erhead;
And sublime as the seraph who rules in the sun
Beams the promise of joy when the conflict is won!

Paul Hamilton Hayne

COMPOSED IN AUTUMN

With these dead leaves stripped from a withered tree,
And slowly fluttering round us, gentle friend,
Some faithless soul a sad presage might blend;
To me they bring a happier augury;
Lives that shall bloom in genial sunshine free,
Nursed by the spell Love's dews and breezes send,
And when a kindly Fate shall speak the end,
Down dropping in Time's autumn silently;
All hopes fulfilled, all passions duly blessed,
Life's cup of gladness drained, except the lees,
No more to fear or long for, but the rest
Which crowns existence with its dreamless ease;
Thus when our days are ripe, oh! let us fall
Into that perfect Peace which waits for all!

Paul Hamilton Hayne

GREAT POETS AND SMALL

Shall I not falter on melodious wing,
In that my notes are weak and may not rise
To those world-wide entrancing harmonies,
Which the great poets to the ages sing?
Shall my thought's humble heaven no longer ring
With pleasant lays, because the empyreal height
Stretches beyond it, lifting to the light
The anointed pinion of song's radiant king?
Ah! a false thought! the thrush her fitful flight
Ventures in vernal dawns; a happy note
Trills from the russet linnet's gentle throat,
Though far above the eagle soars in might,
And the glad skylark—an ethereal mote—
Sings in high realms that mock our straining sight.

Paul Hamilton Hayne

ASPECTS OF THE PINES

Tall, somber, grim, against the morning sky
They rise, scarce touched by melancholy airs,
Which stir the fadeless foliage dreamfully,
As if from realms of mystical despairs.

Tall, somber, grim, they stand with dusky gleams
Brightening to gold within the woodland's core,
Beneath the gracious noontide's tranquil beams—
But the weird winds of morning sigh no more.

A stillness, strange, divine, ineffable,
Broods round and o'er them in the wind's surcease,
And on each tinted copse and shimmering dell
Rests the mute rapture of deep-hearted peace.

Last, sunset comes—the solemn joy and might
Borne from the west when cloudless day declines—
Low, flutelike breezes sweep the waves of light,
And lifting dark green tresses of the pines,

Till every lock is luminous—gently float,
Fraught with hale odors up the heavens afar
To faint when twilight on her virginal throat
Wears for a gem the tremulous vesper star.

Paul Hamilton Hayne

Sidney Lanier (1842-1881)

SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried *Abide, abide*,
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay*,
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide*,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold*
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone
—Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet and amethyst—
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call—
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

Sidney Lanier

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—
Emerald twilights,—
Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,
Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire,—
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of leaves,—
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that grieves,
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-day long did shine
Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth seem
Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of the oak,
And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome sound of the stroke
Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn
Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me of yore
When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bitterness sore,
And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable pain
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face
The vast sweet visage of space.

To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the dawn,
For a mete and a mark
To the forest-dark:—
So:
Affable live-oak, leaning low,—
Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand,
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!)
Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand
On the firm-packed sand,
Free
By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering band
Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the folds of the land.
Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines linger and curl
As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.
Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping of light,
And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods stands high?
The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and the sky!
A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad in the blade,
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or a shade,
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!
Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty the sea
Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,
Everywhere,
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the low-lying lanes,
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,

That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
Farewell, my lord Sun!
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass stir;
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr;
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvellous marshes of Glynn.

Sidney Lanier

TAMPA ROBINS

The robin laughed in the orange-tree:
"Ho, windy North, a fig for thee:
While breasts are red and wings are bold
And green trees wave us globes of gold,
Time's scythe shall reap but bliss for me
—Sunlight, song, and the orange-tree.

Burn, golden globes in leafy sky,
My orange-planets: crimson I
Will shine and shoot among the spheres

(Blithe meteor that no mortal fears)
And thrid the heavenly orange-tree
With orbits bright of minstrelsy.

If that I hate wild winter's spite—
The gibbet trees, the world in white,
The sky but gray wind over a grave—
Why should I ache, the season's slave?
I'll sing from the top of the orange-tree
Gramercy, winter's tyranny.

I'll south with the sun, and keep my clime;
My wing is king of the summer-time;
My breast to the sun his torch shall hold;
And I'll call down through the green and gold
Time, take thy scythe, reap bliss for me,
Bestir thee under the orange-tree."

Sidney Lanier

THE STIRRUP-CUP

Death, thou'rt a cordial old and rare:
Look how compounded, with what care!
Time got his wrinkles reaping thee
Sweet herbs from all antiquity.

David to thy distillage went,
Keats, and Gotama excellent,
Omar Khayyam, and Chaucer bright,
And Shakspere for a king-delight.

Then, Time, let not a drop be spilt:
Hand me the cup whene'er thou wilt;
'Tis thy rich stirrup-cup to me;
I'll drink it down right smilingly.

Sidney Lanier

O. Henry (1862-1910)

THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF

It looked like a good thing: but wait till I tell you. We were down South, in Alabama—Bill Driscoll and myself—when this kidnapping idea struck us. It was, as Bill afterward expressed it, "during a moment of temporary mental apparition"; but we didn't find that out till later.

There was a town down there, as flat as a flannel-cake, and called Summit, of course. It contained inhabitants of as undeleterious and self-satisfied a class of peasantry as ever clustered around a Maypole.

Bill and me had a joint capital of about six hundred dollars, and we needed just two thousand dollars more to pull off a fraudulent town-lot scheme in Western Illinois with. We talked it over on the front steps of the hotel. Philoprogenitiveness, says we, is strong in semi-rural communities; therefore, and for other reasons, a kidnapping project ought to do better there than in the radius of newspapers that send reporters out in plain clothes to stir up talk about such things. We knew that Summit couldn't get after us with anything stronger than constables and, maybe, some lackadaisical bloodhounds and a diatribe or two in the *Weekly Farmers' Budget*. So, it looked good.

We selected for our victim the only child of a prominent citizen named Ebenezer Dorset. The father was respectable and tight, a mortgage fancier and a stern, upright collection-plate passer and forecloser. The kid was a boy of ten, with bas-relief freckles, and hair the colour of the cover of the magazine you buy at the news-stand when you want to catch a train. Bill and me figured that Ebenezer would melt down for a ransom of two thousand dollars to a cent. But wait till I tell you.

About two miles from Summit was a little mountain, covered with a dense cedar brake. On the rear elevation of this mountain was a cave. There we stored provisions.

One evening after sundown, we drove in a buggy past old Dorset's house. The kid was in the street, throwing rocks at a kitten on the opposite fence.

"Hey, little boy!" says Bill, "would you like to have a bag of candy and a nice ride?"

The boy catches Bill neatly in the eye with a piece of brick.

"That will cost the old man an extra five hundred dollars," says Bill, climbing over the wheel.

That boy put up a fight like a welter-weight cinnamon bear; but, at last, we got him down in the bottom of the buggy and drove away. We took him up to the cave, and I hitched the horse in the cedar brake. After dark I drove the buggy to the little village, three miles away, where we had hired it, and walked back to the mountain.

Bill was pasting court-plaster over the scratches and bruises on his features. There was a fire burning behind the big rock at the entrance of the cave, and the boy was watching a pot of boiling coffee, with two buzzard tailfeathers stuck in his red hair. He points a stick at me when I come up, and says:

"Ha! cursed paleface, do you dare to enter the camp of Red Chief, the terror of the plains?"

"He's all right now," says Bill, rolling up his trousers and examining some bruises on his shins. "We're playing Indian. We're making Buffalo Bill's show look like magic-lantern views of Palestine in the town hall. I'm Old Hank, the Trapper, Red Chief's captive, and I'm to be scalped at daybreak. By Geronimo! that kid can kick hard."

Yes, sir, that boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping out in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive himself. He immediately christened me Snake-eye, the Spy, and announced that, when his braves returned from the warpath, I was to be broiled at the stake at the rising of the sun.

Then we had supper; and he filled his mouth full of bacon and bread and gravy, and began to talk. He made a during-dinner speech something like this:

"I like this fine. I never camped out before; but I had a pet 'possum once, and I was nine last birthday. I hate to go to school. Rats ate up sixteen of Jimmy Talbot's aunt's speckled hen's eggs. Are there any real Indians in these woods? I want some more gravy. Does the trees moving make the wind blow? We had five puppies. What makes your nose so red, Hank? My father has lots of money. Are the stars hot? I whipped Ed Walker twice, Saturday. I don't like girls. You dassent catch toads unless with a string. Do oxen make any noise? Why are oranges round? Have you got beds to sleep on in this cave? Amos Murray has got six toes. A parrot can talk, but a monkey or a fish can't. How many does it take to make twelve?"

Every few minutes he would remember that he was a pesky redskin, and pick up his stick rifle and tiptoe to the mouth of the cave to rubber for the scouts of the hated paleface. Now and then he would let out a warwhoop that made Old Hank the Trapper, shiver. That boy had Bill terrorized from the start.

"Red Chief," says I to the kid, "would you like to go home?"

"Aw, what for?" says he. "I don't have any fun at home. I hate to go to school. I like to camp out. You won't take me back home again, Snake-eye, will you?"

"Not right away," says I. "We'll stay here in the cave a while."

"All right!" says he. "That'll be fine. I never had such fun in all my life."

We went to bed about eleven o'clock. We spread down some wide blankets and quilts and put Red Chief between us. We weren't afraid he'd run away. He kept us awake for three hours, jumping up and reaching for his rifle and screeching: "Hist! pard," in mine and Bill's ears, as the fancied crackle of a twig or the rustle of a leaf revealed to his young imagination the stealthy approach of the outlaw band. At last, I fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamed that I had been kidnapped and chained to a tree by a ferocious pirate with red hair.

Just at daybreak, I was awakened by a series of awful screams from Bill. They weren't yells, or howls, or shouts, or whoops, or yawps, such as you'd expect from a manly set of vocal organs—they were simply indecent, terrifying, humiliating screams, such as women emit when they see ghosts or caterpillars. It's an awful thing to hear a strong, desperate, fat man scream incontinently in a cave at daybreak.

I jumped up to see what the matter was. Red Chief was sitting on Bill's chest, with one hand twined in Bill's hair. In the other he had the sharp case-knife we used for slicing bacon; and he was industriously and realistically trying to take Bill's scalp, according to the sentence that had been pronounced upon him the evening before.

I got the knife away from the kid and made him lie down again. But, from that moment, Bill's spirit was broken. He laid down on his side of the bed, but he never closed an eye again in sleep as long as that boy was with us. I dozed off for a while, but along toward sun-up I remembered that Red Chief had said I was to be burned at the stake at the rising of the sun. I wasn't nervous or afraid; but I sat up and lit my pipe and leaned against a rock.

"What you getting up so soon for, Sam?" asked Bill.

"Me?" says I. "Oh, I got a kind of a pain in my shoulder. I thought sitting up would rest it."

"You're a liar!" says Bill. "You're afraid. You was to be burned at sunrise, and you was afraid he'd do it. And he would, too, if he could find a match. Ain't it awful, Sam? Do you think anybody will pay out money to get a little imp like that back home?"

"Sure," said I. "A rowdy kid like that is just the kind that parents dote on. Now, you and the Chief get up and cook breakfast, while I go up on the top of this mountain and reconnoitre."

I went up on the peak of the little mountain and ran my eye over the contiguous vicinity. Over toward Summit I expected to see the sturdy yeomanry of the village armed with scythes and pitchforks beating the countryside for the dastardly kidnappers. But what I saw was a peaceful landscape dotted with one man ploughing with a dun mule. Nobody was dragging the creek; no couriers dashed hither and yon, bringing tidings of no news to the distracted parents. There was a sylvan attitude of somnolent sleepiness pervading that section of the external outward surface of Alabama that lay exposed to my view. "Perhaps," says I to myself, "it has not yet been discovered that the wolves have borne away the tender lambkin from the fold. Heaven help the wolves!" says I, and I went down the mountain to breakfast.

When I got to the cave I found Bill backed up against the side of it, breathing hard, and the boy threatening to smash him with a rock half as big as a cocoanut.

"He put a red-hot boiled potato down my back," explained Bill, "and then mashed it with his foot; and I boxed his ears. Have you got a gun about you, Sam?"

I took the rock away from the boy and kind of patched up the argument. "I'll fix you," says the kid to Bill. "No man ever yet struck the Red Chief but what he got paid for it. You better beware!"

After breakfast the kid takes a piece of leather with strings wrapped around it out of his pocket and goes outside the cave unwinding it.

"What's he up to now?" says Bill, anxiously. "You don't think he'll run away, do you, Sam?"

"No fear of it," says I. "He don't seem to be much of a home body. But we've got to fix up some plan about the ransom. There don't seem to be much excitement around

Summit on account of his disappearance; but maybe they haven't realized yet that he's gone. His folks may think he's spending the night with Aunt Jane or one of the neighbours. Anyhow, he'll be missed to-day. To-night we must get a message to his father demanding the two thousand dollars for his return."

Just then we heard a kind of war-whoop, such as David might have emitted when he knocked out the champion Goliath. It was a sling that Red Chief had pulled out of his pocket, and he was whirling it around his head.

I dodged, and heard a heavy thud and a kind of a sigh from Bill, like a horse gives out when you take his saddle off. A niggerhead rock the size of an egg had caught Bill just behind his left ear. He loosened himself all over and fell in the fire across the frying pan of hot water for washing the dishes. I dragged him out and poured cold water on his head for half an hour.

By and by, Bill sits up and feels behind his ear and says: "Sam, do you know who my favourite Biblical character is?"

"Take it easy," says I. "You'll come to your senses presently."

"King Herod," says he. "You won't go away and leave me here alone, will you, Sam?"

I went out and caught that boy and shook him until his freckles rattled.

"If you don't behave," says I, "I'll take you straight home. Now, are you going to be good, or not?"

"I was only funning," says he sullenly. "I didn't mean to hurt Old Hank. But what did he hit me for? I'll behave, Snake-eye, if you won't send me home, and if you'll let me play the Black Scout to-day."

"I don't know the game," says I. "That's for you and Mr. Bill to decide. He's your playmate for the day. I'm going away for a while, on business. Now, you come in and make friends with him and say you are sorry for hurting him, or home you go, at once."

I made him and Bill shake hands, and then I took Bill aside and told him I was going to Poplar Cove, a little village three miles from the cave, and find out what I could about how the kidnapping had been regarded in Summit. Also, I thought it best to send a peremptory letter to old man Dorset that day, demanding the ransom and dictating how it should be paid.

"You know, Sam," says Bill, "I've stood by you without batting an eye in earthquakes, fire and flood—in poker games, dynamite outrages, police raids, train robberies and cyclones. I never lost my nerve yet till we kidnapped that two-legged skyrocket of a kid. He's got me going. You won't leave me long with him, will you, Sam?"

"I'll be back some time this afternoon," says I. "You must keep the boy amused and quiet till I return. And now we'll write the letter to old Dorset."

Bill and I got paper and pencil and worked on the letter while Red Chief, with a blanket wrapped around him, strutted up and down, guarding the mouth of the cave. Bill begged me tearfully to make the ransom fifteen hundred dollars instead of two thousand. "I ain't attempting," says he, "to decry the celebrated moral aspect of parental affection, but we're dealing with humans, and it ain't human for anybody to give up two thousand dollars for that forty-pound chunk of freckled wildcat. I'm willing to take a chance at fifteen hundred dollars. You can charge the difference up to me."

So, to relieve Bill, I acceded, and we collaborated a letter that ran this way:

Ebenezer Dorset, Esq.:

We have your boy concealed in a place far from Summit. It is useless for you or the most skilful detectives to attempt to find him. Absolutely, the only terms on which you can have him restored to you are these: We demand fifteen hundred dollars in large bills for his return; the money to be left at midnight to-night at the same spot and in the same box as your reply—as hereinafter described. If you agree to these terms, send your answer in writing by a solitary messenger to-night at half-past eight o'clock. After crossing Owl Creek, on the road to Poplar Cove, there are three large trees about a hundred yards apart, close to the fence of the wheat field on the right-hand side. At the bottom of the fence-post, opposite the third tree, will be found a small pasteboard box.

The messenger will place the answer in this box and return immediately to Summit.

If you attempt any treachery or fail to comply with our demand as stated, you will never see your boy again.

If you pay the money as demanded, he will be returned to you safe and well within three hours. These terms are final, and if you do not accede to them no further communication will be attempted.

TWO DESPERATE MEN.

I addressed this letter to Dorset, and put it in my pocket. As I was about to start, the kid comes up to me and says:

"Aw, Snake-eye, you said I could play the Black Scout while you was gone."

"Play it, of course," says I. "Mr. Bill will play with you. What kind of a game is it?"

"I'm the Black Scout," says Red Chief, "and I have to ride to the stockade to warn the settlers that the Indians are coming. I'm tired of playing Indian myself. I want to be the Black Scout."

"All right," says I. "It sounds harmless to me. I guess Mr. Bill will help you foil the pesky savages."

"What am I to do?" asks Bill, looking at the kid suspiciously.

"You are the hoss," says Black Scout. "Get down on your hands and knees. How can I ride to the stockade without a hoss?"

"You'd better keep him interested," said I, "till we get the scheme going. Loosen up."

Bill gets down on his all fours, and a look comes in his eye like a rabbit's when you catch it in a trap.

"How far is it to the stockade, kid?" he asks, in a husky manner of voice.

"Ninety miles," says the Black Scout. "And you have to hump yourself to get there on time. Whoa, now!"

The Black Scout jumps on Bill's back and digs his heels in his side.

"For Heaven's sake," says Bill, "hurry back, Sam, as soon as you can. I wish we hadn't made the ransom more than a thousand. Say, you quit kicking me or I'll get up and warm you good."

I walked over to Poplar Cove and sat around the post-office and store, talking with the chawbacons that came in to trade. One whiskerand says that he hears Summit is all upset on account of Elder Ebenezer Dorset's boy having been lost or stolen. That was all I wanted to know. I bought some smoking tobacco, referred casually to the price of black-eyed peas, posted my letter surreptitiously and came away. The postmaster said the mail-carrier would come by in an hour to take the mail on to Summit.

When I got back to the cave Bill and the boy were not to be found. I explored the vicinity of the cave, and risked a yodel or two, but there was no response.

So I lighted my pipe and sat down on a mossy bank to await developments.

In about half an hour I heard the bushes rustle, and Bill wabbled out into the little glade in front of the cave. Behind him was the kid, stepping softly like a scout, with a broad grin on his face. Bill stopped, took off his hat and wiped his face with a red handkerchief. The kid stopped about eight feet behind him.

"Sam," says Bill, "I suppose you'll think I'm a renegade, but I couldn't help it. I'm a grown person with masculine proclivities and habits of self-defense, but there is a time when all systems of egotism and predominance fail. The boy is gone. I have sent him home. All is off. There was martyrs in old times," goes on Bill, "that suffered death rather than give up the particular graft they enjoyed. None of 'em ever was subjugated to such supernatural tortures as I have been. I tried to be faithful to our articles of depredation; but there came a limit."

"What's the trouble, Bill?" I asks him.

"I was rode," says Bill, "the ninety miles to the stockade, not barring an inch. Then, when the settlers was rescued, I was given oats. Sand ain't a palatable substitute. And then, for an hour I had to try to explain to him why there was nothin' in holes, how a road can run both ways and what makes the grass green. I tell you, Sam, a human can only stand so much. I takes him by the neck of his clothes and drags him down the mountain. On the way he kicks my legs black-and-blue from the knees down; and I've got two or three bites on my thumb and hand cauterized.

"But he's gone"—continues Bill—"gone home. I showed him the road to Summit and kicked him about eight feet nearer there at one kick. I'm sorry we lose the ransom; but it was either that or Bill Driscoll to the madhouse."

Bill is puffing and blowing, but there is a look of ineffable peace and growing content on his rose-pink features.

"Bill," says I, "there isn't any heart disease in your family, is there?"

"No," says Bill, "nothing chronic except malaria and accidents. Why?"

"Then you might turn around," says I, "and have a look behind you."

Bill turns and sees the boy, and loses his complexion and sits down plump on the ground and begins to pluck aimlessly at grass and little sticks. For an hour I was afraid for his mind. And then I told him that my scheme was to put the whole job through immediately and that we would get the ransom and be off with it by midnight if old Dorset fell in with our proposition. So Bill braced up enough to give the kid a weak sort of a smile and a promise to play the Russian in a Japanese war with him as soon as he felt a little better.

I had a scheme for collecting that ransom without danger of being caught by counterplots that ought to commend itself to professional kidnappers. The tree under which the answer was to be left—and the money later on—was close to the road fence with big, bare fields on all sides. If a gang of constables should be watching for any one to come for the note they could see him a long way off crossing the fields or in the road. But no, sirree! At half-past eight I was up in that tree as well hidden as a tree toad, waiting for the messenger to arrive.

Exactly on time, a half-grown boy rides up the road on a bicycle, locates the pasteboard box at the foot of the fence-post, slips a folded piece of paper into it and pedals away again back toward Summit.

I waited an hour and then concluded the thing was square. I slid down the tree, got the note, slipped along the fence till I struck the woods, and was back at the cave in another half an hour. I opened the note, got near the lantern and read it to Bill. It was written with a pen in a crabbed hand, and the sum and substance of it was this:

Two Desperate Men.

Gentlemen: I received your letter to-day by post, in regard to the ransom you ask for the return of my son. I think you are a little high in your demands, and I hereby make you a counter-proposition, which I am inclined to believe you will accept. You bring Johnny home and pay me two hundred and fifty dollars in cash, and I agree to take him off your hands. You had better come at night, for the neighbours believe he is lost, and I couldn't be responsible for what they would do to anybody they saw bringing him back.

Very respectfully,
Ebenezer Dorset.

"Great pirates of Penzance!" says I; "of all the impudent—"

But I glanced at Bill, and hesitated. He had the most appealing look in his eyes I ever saw on the face of a dumb or a talking brute.

"Sam," says he, "what's two hundred and fifty dollars, after all? We've got the money. One more night of this kid will send me to a bed in Bedlam. Besides being a thorough gentleman, I think Mr. Dorset is a spendthrift for making us such a liberal offer. You ain't going to let the chance go, are you?"

"Tell you the truth, Bill," says I, "this little he ewe lamb has somewhat got on my nerves too. We'll take him home, pay the ransom and make our get-away."

We took him home that night. We got him to go by telling him that his father had bought a silver-mounted rifle and a pair of moccasins for him, and we were going to hunt bears the next day.

It was just twelve o'clock when we knocked at Ebenezer's front door. Just at the moment when I should have been abstracting the fifteen hundred dollars from the box under the tree, according to the original proposition, Bill was counting out two hundred and fifty dollars into Dorset's hand.

When the kid found out we were going to leave him at home he started up a howl like a calliope and fastened himself as tight as a leech to Bill's leg. His father peeled him away gradually, like a porous plaster.

"How long can you hold him?" asks Bill.

"I'm not as strong as I used to be," says old Dorset, "but I think I can promise you ten minutes."

"Enough," says Bill. "In ten minutes I shall cross the Central, Southern and Middle Western States, and be legging it trippingly for the Canadian border."

And, as dark as it was, and as fat as Bill was, and as good a runner as I am, he was a good mile and a half out of Summit before I could catch up with him.

O. Henry

THE LAST LEAF

In a little district west of Washington Square the streets have run crazy and broken themselves into small strips called "places." These "places" make strange angles and curves. One street crosses itself a time or two. An artist once discovered a valuable possibility in this street. Suppose a collector with a bill for paints, paper, and canvas should, in traversing this route, suddenly meet himself coming back, without a cent having been paid on account!

So, to quaint old Greenwich Village the art people soon came prowling, hunting for north windows and eighteenth-century gables and Dutch attics and low rents. Then they imported some pewter mugs and a chafing dish or two from Sixth avenue, and became a "colony."

At the top of a squatty, three-story brick Sue and Johnsy had their studio. "Johnsy" was familiar for Joanna. One was from Maine; the other from California. They had met at the *table d'hote* of an Eighth street "Delmonico's," and found their tastes in art, chicory salad, and bishop sleeves so congenial that the joint studio resulted.

That was in May. In November a cold, unseen stranger, whom the doctors called Pneumonia, stalked about the colony, touching one here and there with his icy fingers. Over on the east side this ravager strode boldly, smiting his victims by scores, but his feet trod slowly through the maze of the narrow and moss-grown "places."

Mr. Pneumonia was not what you would call a chivalric old gentleman. A mite of a little woman with blood thinned by California zephyrs was hardly fair game for the red-fisted, short-breathed old duffer. But Johnsy he smote; and she lay, scarcely moving, on her painted iron bedstead, looking through the small Dutch window-panes at the blank side of the next brick house.

One morning the busy doctor invited Sue into the hallway with a shaggy, gray eyebrow.

"She has one chance in—let us say, ten," he said; as he shook down the mercury in his clinical thermometer. "And that chance is for her to want to live. This way people have of lining-up on the side of the undertaker makes the entire pharmacopeia look silly. Your little lady has made up her mind that she's not going to get well. Has she anything on her mind?"

"She—she wanted to paint the Bay of Naples some day," said Sue.

"Paint?—bosh! Has she anything on her mind worth thinking about twice—a man, for instance?"

"A man?" said Sue, with a jew's-harp twang in her voice. "Is a man worth—but, no, doctor; there is nothing of the kind."

"Well, it is the weakness, then," said the doctor. "I will do all that science, so far as it may filter through my efforts, can accomplish. But whenever my patient begins to count the carriages in her funeral procession I subtract fifty per cent. from the curative power of medicines. If you will get her to ask one question about the new winter styles in cloak sleeves I will promise you a one-in-five chance for her, instead of one in ten."

After the doctor had gone, Sue went into the workroom and cried a Japanese napkin to a pulp. Then she swaggered into Johnsy's room with her drawing board, whistling ragtime.

Johnsy lay, scarcely making a ripple under the bedclothes, with her face toward the window. Sue stopped whistling, thinking she was asleep.

She arranged her board and began a pen-and-ink drawing to illustrate a magazine story. Young artists must pave their way to Art by drawing pictures for magazine stories that young authors write to pave their way to Literature.

As Sue was sketching a pair of elegant horse-show riding trousers and a monocle on the figure of the hero, an Idaho cowboy, she heard a low sound, several times repeated. She went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting—counting backward.

"Twelve," she said, and a little later "eleven"; and then "ten," and "nine"; and then "eight" and "seven," almost together.

Sue looked solicitously out the window. What was there to count? There was only a bare, dreary yard to be seen, and the blank side of the brick house twenty feet away. An old, old ivy vine, gnarled and decayed at the roots, climbed half way up the brick wall. The cold breath of autumn had stricken its leaves from the vine until its skeleton branches clung, almost bare, to the crumbling bricks.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, in almost a whisper. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head ache to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear? Tell your Sudie."

"Leaves. On the ivy vine. When the last one falls I must go, too. I've known that for three days. Did n't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such nonsense," complained Sue, with magnificent scorn. "What have old ivy leaves to do with your getting well? And you used to love that vine so, you naughty girl. Don't be a goosey. Why, the doctor told me this morning that your chances for getting well real soon were—let's see exactly what he said—he said the chances were ten to one! Why, that's almost as good a chance as we have in New York when we ride on the street cars or walk past a new building. Try to take some broth now, and let Sudie go back to her drawing, so she can sell the editor man with it, and buy port wine for her sick child. and pork chops for her greedy self."

"You need n't get any more wine," said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed out the window. "There goes another. No, I don't want any broth. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I'll go, too."

"Johnsy, dear," said Sue, bending over her, "will you promise me to keep your eyes closed, and not look out the window until I am done working? I must hand those drawings in by to-morrow. I need the light, or I would draw the shade down."

"Could n't you draw in the other room?" asked Johnsy, coldly.

"I'd rather be here by you," said Sue. "Besides, I don't want you to keep looking at those silly ivy leaves."

"Tell me as soon as you have finished," said Johnsy, closing her eyes, and lying white and still as a fallen statue, "because I want to see the last one fall. I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on everything, and go sailing down, down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves."

"Try to sleep," said Sue. "I must call Behrman up to be my model for the old hermit miner. I'll not be gone a minute. Don't try to move till I come back."

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor beneath them. He was past sixty and had a Michael Angelo's Moses beard curling down from the head of a satyr along the body of an imp. Behrman was a failure in art. Forty years he had wielded the brush without getting near enough to touch the hem of his Mistress's robe. He had been always about to paint a masterpiece, but had never yet begun it. For several years he had painted nothing except now and then a daub in the line of commerce or advertising. He earned a little by serving as a model to those young artists in the colony who could not pay the price of a professional. He drank gin to excess, and still talked of his coming masterpiece. For the rest he was a fierce little old man, who scoffed terribly at softness in any one, and who regarded himself as especial mastiff-in-waiting to protect the two young artists in the studio above.

Sue found Behrman smelling strongly of juniper berries in his dimly lighted den below. In one corner was a blank canvas on an easel that had been waiting there for twenty-five years to receive the first line of the masterpiece. She told him of Johnsy's fancy, and how she feared she would, indeed, light and fragile as a leaf herself, float away when her slight hold upon the world grew weaker.

Old Behrman, with his red eyes plainly streaming, shouted his contempt and derision for such idiotic imaginings.

"Vass!" he cried. "Is dere people in de world mit der foolishness to die because leafs dey drop off from a confounded vine? I haf not heard of such a thing. No, I vill not bose as a model for your fool hermit-dunderhead. Vy do you allow dot silly pusiness to come in der prain of her? Ach, dot poor leetle Miss Johnsy."

"She is very ill and weak," said Sue, "and the fever has left her mind morbid and full of strange fancies. Very well, Mr. Behrman, if you do not care to pose for me, you need n't. But I think you are a horrid old—old flibbertigibbet."

"You are just like a woman!" yelled Behrman. "Who said I vill not bose? Go on. I come mit you. For half an hour I haf peen trying to say dot I am ready to bose. Gott! dis is not any blace in which one so goot as Miss Yohnsy shall lie sick. Some day I vill baint a masterpiece, and ve shall all go avay. Gott! yes."

Johnsy was sleeping when they went upstairs. Sue pulled the shade down to the window-sill, and motioned Behrman into the other room. In there they peered out the window fearfully at the ivy vine. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A persistent, cold rain was falling, mingled with snow. Behrman, in his old blue shirt, took his seat as the hermit-miner on an upturned kettle for a rock.

When Sue awoke from an hour's sleep the next morning she found Johnsy with dull, wide-open eyes staring at the drawn green shade.

"Pull it up; I want to see," she ordered, in a whisper.

Wearily Sue obeyed.

But, lo! after the beating rain and fierce gusts of wind that had endured through the livelong night, there yet stood out against the brick wall one ivy leaf. It was the last on the vine. Still dark green near its stem, but with its serrated edges tinted with the yellow of dissolution and decay, it hung bravely from a branch some twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall to-day, and I shall die at the same time."

"Dear, dear!" said Sue, leaning her worn face down to the pillow, "think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do?"

But Johnsy did not answer. The lonesomest thing in all the world is a soul when it is making ready to go on its mysterious, far journey. The fancy seemed to possess her more strongly as one by one the ties that bound her to friendship and to earth were loosed.

The day wore away, and even through the twilight they could see the lone ivy leaf clinging to its stem against the wall. And then, with the coming of the night the north wind was again loosed, while the rain still beat against the windows and pattered down from the low Dutch eaves.

When it was light enough Johnsy, the merciless, commanded that the shade be raised.

The ivy leaf was still there.

Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was stirring her chicken broth over the gas stove.

"I've been a bad girl, Sudie, "said Johnsy. "Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how wicked

I was. It is a sin to want to die. You may bring me a little broth now, and some milk with a little port in it, and—no; bring me a hand-mirror first, and then pack some pillows about me, and I will sit up and watch you cook."

An hour later she said,

"Sudie, some day I hope to paint the Bay of Naples."

The doctor came in the afternoon, and Sue had an excuse to go into the hallway as he left.

"Even chances," said the doctor, taking Sue's thin, shaking hand in his. "With good nursing you'll win. And now I must see another case I have downstairs. Behrman, his name is—some kind of an artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is an old, weak man, and the attack is acute. There is no hope for him; but he goes to the hospital to-day to be made more comfortable."

The next day the doctor said to Sue: "She's out of danger. You've won. Nutrition and care now—that's all."

And that afternoon Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay, contentedly knitting a very blue and very useless woolen shoulder scarf, and put one arm around her, pillows and all.

"I have something to tell you, white mouse," she said. "Mr. Behrman died of pneumonia to-day in the hospital. He was ill only two days. The janitor found him on the morning of the first day in his room downstairs helpless with pain. His shoes and clothing were wet through and icy cold. They could n't imagine where he had been on such a dreadful night. And then they found a lantern, still lighted, and a ladder that had been dragged from its place, and some scattered brushes, and a palette with green and yellow colors mixed on it, and—look out the window, dear, at the last ivy leaf on the wall. Did n't you wonder why it never fluttered or moved when the wind blew? Ah, darling, it's Behrman's masterpiece—he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell."

O. Henry

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

ADDRESS AT THE DEDICATION OF THE GETTYSBURG NATIONAL CEMETERY

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln

YOUNG AMERICA

We have all heard of Young America. He is the most current youth of the age. Some think him conceited and arrogant; but has he not reason to entertain a rather extensive opinion of himself? Is he not the inventor and owner of the present, and sole hope of the future? Men and things, everywhere, are ministering unto him. Look at his apparel, and you shall see cotton fabrics from Manchester and Lowell; flax linen from Ireland; wool cloth from Spain; silk from France; furs from the arctic region; with a buffalo-robe from the Rocky Mountains, as a general outsider. At his table, besides plain bread and meat made at home, are sugar from Louisiana, coffee and fruits from the tropics, salt from Turk's Island, fish from Newfoundland, tea from China, and spices from the Indies. The whale of the Pacific furnishes his candle-light, he has a diamond ring from Brazil, a gold watch from California, and a Spanish cigar from Havana. He not only has a present supply of all these, and much more; but thousands of hands are engaged in producing fresh supplies, and other thousands in bringing them to him. The iron horse is panting and impatient to carry him everywhere in no time; and the lightning stands ready harnessed to take and bring his tidings in a trifle less than no time. He owns a large part of the world, by right of possessing it, and all the rest by right of wanting it and intending to have it. As Plato had for the immortality of the soul, so Young America has "a pleasing hope, a fond desire—a longing after" territory. He has a great passion—a perfect rage—for the "new"; particularly new men for office, and the new earth mentioned in the Revelations, in which, being no more sea, there must be about three times as much land as in the present. He is a great friend of humanity; and his desire for land is not selfish, but merely an impulse to extend the area of freedom. He is very anxious to fight for the liberation of enslaved nations and colonies, provided, always, they have land, and have not any liking for his interference. As to those who have no land, and would be glad of help from any quarter, he considers they can afford to wait a few hundred years longer. In knowledge he is particularly rich. He knows all that can possibly be known; inclines to believe in spiritual rappings, and is the unquestioned inventor of "Manifest Destiny." His horror is for all that is old, particularly "Old Fogy"; and if there be anything old which he can endure, it is only old whisky and old tobacco.

If the said Young America really is, as he claims to be, the owner of all present, it must be admitted that he has considerable advantage of Old Fogy. Take, for instance, the first of all fogies, Father Adam. There he stood, a very perfect physical man, as poets and painters inform us; but he must have been very ignorant, and simple in his habits. He had had no sufficient time to learn much by observation, and he had no near neighbors to teach him anything. No part of his breakfast had been brought from the other side of the world; and it is quite probable he had no conception of the world having any other side. In all these things, it is very plain, he was no equal of Young America; the most that can be said is, that according to his chance he may have been quite as much of a man as his very self-complacent descendant. Little as was what he knew, let the youngster discard all he has learned from others, and then show, if he can, any advantage on his side. In the way of land and live-stock, Adam was quite in the ascendant. He had dominion over all the earth, and all the living things upon and round about it. The land has been sadly divided out since; but never fret, Young America will re-annex it.

The great difference between Young America and Old Fogy is the result of discoveries, inventions, and improvements. These, in turn, are the result of observation, reflection, and experiment. . . . . All nature — the whole world, material, moral, and intellectual — is a mine; and in Adam's day it was a wholly unexplored mine. Now, it was the destined work of Adam's race to develop, by discoveries, inventions, and improvements, the hidden treasures of this mine. But Adam had nothing to turn his attention to the work. If he should do anything in the way of inventions, he had first to invent the art of invention, the instance, at least, if not the habit, of observation and reflection. As might be expected, he seems not to have been a very observing man at first; for it appears he went about naked a considerable length of time before he ever noticed that obvious fact. But when he did observe it, the observation was not lost upon him; for it immediately led to the first of all inventions of which we have any direct account—the fig-leaf apron. . . . .

What one observes, and would himself infer nothing from, he tells to another, and that other at once sees a valuable hint in it. A result is thus reached which neither alone would have arrived at. And this reminds me that the very first invention was a joint operation, Eve having shared with Adam the getting up of the apron. And, indeed, judging from the fact that sewing has come down to our times as "woman's work," it is very probable she took the leading part,—he, perhaps, doing no more than to stand by and thread the needle. That proceeding may be reckoned as the mother of all "sewing-societies," and the first and most perfect "World's Fair," all inventions and all inventors then in the world being on the spot.

Abraham Lincoln

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

THE CELEBRATED JUMPING FROG
Of Calaveras County

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend's friend, *Leonidas W.* Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append the result. I have a lurking suspicion that *Leonidas W.* Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous *Jim* Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some infernal reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless to me. If that was the design, it certainly succeeded.

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the old, dilapidated tavern in the ancient mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance. He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about a cherished companion of his boyhood named *Leonidas W.* Smiley—*Rev. Leonidas W.* Smiley—a young minister of the Gospel, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel's Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me any thing about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was any thing ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in *finesse*. To me, the spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling, was exquisitely absurd. As I said before, I asked him to tell me what he knew of Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and he replied as follows. I let him go on in his own way, and never interrupted him once:

There was a feller here once by the name of *Jim* Smiley, in the winter of '49—or may be it was the spring of '50—I don't recollect exactly, somehow, though what makes me think it was one or the other is because I remember the big flume was n't finished when he first came to the camp; but any way, he was the curiosest man about always betting on any thing that turned up you ever see, if he could get any body to bet on the other side; and if he could n't, he'd change sides. Any way that suited the other man would suit him—any way just so's he got a bet, *he* was satisfied. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner. He was always ready and laying for a chance; there could n't be no solitry thing mentioned but that feller'd offer to bet on it, and take any side you please, as I was just telling you. If there was a horse-race, you'd find him flush, or you'd find him busted at the end of it; if there was a dog-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a cat-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a chicken-fight, he'd bet on it; why, if there was two birds setting on a fence, he would bet you which one would fly first; or if there was a camp-meeting, he would be there reg'lar, to bet on Parson Walker, which he judged to be the best exhorter about here, and so he was, too, and a good man. If he even seen a straddle-bug start to go anywheres, he would bet you how long it would take him to get to wherever he was going to, and if you took him up, he would foller that straddle-bug to Mexico but what he would find out where he was bound for and how long he was on the road. Lots of the boys here has seen that Smiley, and can tell you about him. Why, it never made no difference to *him*—he would bet on *any* thing—the dangdest feller. Parson Walker's wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they war n't going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley asked how she was, and he said she was considerable better—thank the Lord for his inf'nit mercy—and coming on so smart that, with the blessing of Prov'dence, she'd get well yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, "Well, I'll risk two-and-a-half that she don't, any way."

Thish-yer Smiley had a mare—the boys called her the fifteen-minute nag, but that was only in fun, you know, because, of course, she was faster than that—and he used to win money on that horse, for all she was so slow and always had the asthma, or the distemper, or the consumption, or something of that kind. They used to give her two or three hundred yards start, and then pass her under way; but always at the fag-end of the race she'd get excited and desperate-like, and come cavorting and straddling up, and scattering her legs around limber, sometimes in the air, and sometimes out to one side amongst the fences, and kicking up m-o-r-e dust, and raising m-o-r-e racket with her coughing and sneezing and blowing her nose—and always fetch up at the stand just about a neck ahead, as near as you could cipher it down.

And he had a little small bull pup, that to look at him you'd think he wan't worth a cent, but to set around and look ornery, and lay for a chance to steal something. But as soon as money was up on him, he was a different dog; his underjaw'd begin to stick out like the fo'castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover, and shine savage like the furnaces. And a dog might tackle him, and bully-rag him, and bite him, and throw him over his shoulder two or three times, and Andrew Jackson—which was the name of the pup—Andrew Jackson would never let on but what *he* was satisfied, and had n't expected nothing else—and the bets being doubled and doubled on the other side all the time, till the money was all up; and then all of a sudden he would grab that other dog jest by the j'int of his hind leg and freeze to it—not chaw, you understand, but only jest grip and hang on till they throwed up the sponge, if it was a year. Smiley always come out winner on that pup, till he harnessed a dog once that did n't have no hind legs, because they'd been sawed off by a circular saw, and when the thing had gone along far enough, and the money was all up, and he come to make a snatch for his pet holt, he saw in a minute how he'd been imposed on, and how the other dog had been in the door, so to speak, and he 'peared surprised, and then he looked sorter discouraged-like, and did n't try no more to win the fight, and so he got shucked out bad. He give Smiley a look, as much as to say his heart was broke, and it was *his* fault, for putting up a dog than had n't no hind legs for him to take holt of, which was his main dependence in a fight, and then he limped off a piece and laid down and died. It was a good pup, was that Andrew Jackson, and would have made a name for hisself if he'd lived, for the stuff was in him, and he had genius—I know it, because he had n't had no opportunities to speak of, and it don't stand to reason that a dog could make such a fight as he could under them circumstances, if he had n't no talent. It always makes me feel sorry when I think of that last fight of his'n, and the way it turned out.

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, and chicken cocks, and tom-cats, and all them kind of things, till you could n't rest, and you could n't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'klated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he *did* learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut—see him turn one summerset, or may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most any thing—and I believe him. Why, I've seen him set Dan'l Webster down here on this floor—Dan'l Webster was the name of the frog—and sing out, "Flies, Dan'l, flies!" and quicker'n you could wink, he'd spring straight up, and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor again as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn't no idea he'd been doin' any more'n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightfor'ard as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it come to that, Smiley would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of that frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywheres, all said he laid over any frog that ever *they* see.

Well, Smiley kept the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was—come across him with his box, and says:

"What might it be that you've got in the box?"

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent like, "It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, may be, but it an't—it's only just a frog."

And the feller took it and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, "H'm—so 'tis. Well, what's *he* good for?"

"Well," Smiley says, easy and careless, "He's good enough for *one* thing, I should judge—he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, "Well, I don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

"May be you don't," Smiley says. "May be you understand frogs, and may be you don't understand 'em; may be you've had experience, and may be you an't only a amature, as it were. Anyways, I've got *my* opinion, and I'll risk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, "Well, I'm only a stranger here, and I ain't got no frog; but if I had a frog, I'd bet you."

And then Smiley says, "That's all right—that's all right—if you'll hold my box a minute, I'll go and get you a frog." And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley's, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a teaspoon and filled him full of quail shot—filled him pretty near up to his chin—and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketched a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

"Now, if you're ready, set him alongside of Dan'l, with his forepaws just even with Dan'l, and I'll give the word." Then he says, "One—two—three—jump!" and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off, but Dan'l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders—so—like a Frenchman, but it wan't no use—he couldn't budge; he was planted as solid as an anvil, and he couldn't no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted too, but he didn't have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulders—this way—at Dan'l, and says again, very deliberate, "Well, *I* don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan'l a long time, and at last he says, "I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw'd off for—I wonder if there an't something the matter with him—he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow." And he ketched Dan'l by the nap of the neck, and lifted him up and says, "Why, blame my cats, if he don't weigh five pound!" and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man—he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketched him. And—

[Here Simon Wheeler heard his name called from the front yard, and got up to see what was wanted.] And turning to me as he moved away, he said, "Just set where you are, stranger, and rest easy—I an't going to be gone a second."

But, by your leave, I did not think that a continuation of the history of the enterprising vagabond *Jim* Smiley would be likely to afford me much information concerning the Rev. *Leonidas W*. Smiley, and so I started away.

At the door I met the sociable Wheeler returning, and he buttonholed me and recommenced:

"Well, thish-yer Smiley had a yaller one-eyed cow that didn't have no tail, only jest a short stump like a bannanner, and—"

"Oh, hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!" I muttered, good-naturedly, and bidding the old gentleman good-day, I departed.

Mark Twain

Bret Harte (1839-1902)

TENNESSEE'S PARTNER

I do not think that we ever knew his real name. Our ignorance of it certainly never gave us any social inconvenience, for at Sandy Bar in 1854 most men were christened anew. Sometimes these appellatives were derived from some distinctiveness of dress, as in the case of "Dungaree Jack"; or from some peculiarity of habit, as shown in "Saleratus Bill," so called from an undue proportion of that chemical in his daily bread; or from some unlucky slip, as exhibited in "The Iron Pirate," a mild, inoffensive man, who earned that baleful title by his unfortunate mispronunciation of the term "iron pyrites." Perhaps this may have been the beginning of a rude heraldry; but I am constrained to think that it was because a man's real name in that day rested solely upon his own unsupported statement. "Call yourself Clifford, do you?" said Boston, addressing a timid newcomer with infinite scorn; "hell is full of such Cliffords!" He then introduced the unfortunate man, whose name happened to be really Clifford, as "Jaybird Charley,"—an unhallowed inspiration of the moment that clung to him ever after.

But to return to Tennessee's Partner, whom we never knew by any other than this relative title. That he had ever existed as a separate and distinct individuality we only learned later. It seems that in 1853 he left Poker Flat to go to San Francisco, ostensibly to procure a wife. He never got any farther than Stockton. At that place he was attracted by a young person who waited upon the table at the hotel where he took his meals. One morning he said something to her which caused her to smile not unkindly, to somewhat coquettishly break a plate of toast over his upturned, serious, simple face, and to retreat to the kitchen.

He followed her, and emerged a few moments later, covered with more toast and victory. That day week they were married by a justice of the peace, and returned to Poker Flat. I am aware that something more might be made of this episode, but I prefer to tell it as it was current at Sandy Bar —in the gulches and bar-rooms,—where all sentiment was modified by a strong sense of humor.

Of their married felicity but little is known, perhaps for the reason that Tennessee, then living with his partner, one day took occasion to say something to the bride on his own account, at which, it is said, she smiled not unkindly and chastely retreated,—this time as far as Marysville, where Tennessee followed her, and where they went to housekeeping without the aid of a justice of the peace. Tennessee's Partner took the loss of his wife simply and seriously, as was his fashion. But to everybody's surprise, when Tennessee one day returned from Marysville, without his partner's wife,—she having smiled and retreated with somebody else,—Tennessee's Partner was the first man to shake his hand and greet him with affection. The boys who had gathered in the cañon to see the shooting were naturally indignant. Their indignation might have found vent in sarcasm but for a certain look in Tennessee's Partner's eye that indicated a lack of humorous appreciation. In fact, he was a grave man, with a steady application to practical detail which was unpleasant in a difficulty.

Meanwhile a popular feeling against Tennessee had grown up on the Bar. He was known to be a gambler; he was suspected to be a thief. In these suspicions Tennessee's Partner was equally compromised; his continued intimacy with Tennessee after the affair above quoted could only be accounted for on the hypothesis of a copartnership of crime. At last Tennessee's guilt became flagrant. One day he overtook a stranger on his way to Red Dog. The stranger afterward related that Tennessee beguiled the time with interesting anecdote and reminiscence, but illogically concluded the interview in the following words: "And now, young man, I'll trouble you for your knife, your pistols, and your money. You see your weppings might get you into trouble at Red Dog, and your money's a temptation to the evilly disposed. I think you said your address was San Francisco. I shall endeavor to call." It may be stated here that Tennessee had a fine flow of humor, which no business preoccupation could wholly subdue.

This exploit was his last. Red Dog and Sandy Bar made common cause against the highwayman. Tennessee was hunted in very much the same fashion as his prototype, the grizzly. As the toils closed around him, he made a desperate dash through the Bar, emptying his revolver at the crowd before the Arcade Saloon, and so on up Grizzly Cañon; but at its farther extremity he was stopped by a small man on a gray horse. The men looked at each other a moment in silence. Both were fearless, both self-possessed and independent, and both types of a civilization that in the seventeenth century would have been called heroic, but in the nineteenth simply "reckless."

"What have you got there?—I call," said Tennessee, quietly.

"Two bowers and an ace," said the stranger as quietly, showing two revolvers and a bowie-knife.

"That takes me," returned Tennessee; and, with this gambler's epigram, he threw away his useless pistol and rode back with his captor.

It was a warm night. The cool breeze which usually sprang up with the going down of the sun behind the chaparral-crested mountain was that evening withheld from Sandy Bar. The little cañon was stifling with heated resinous odors, and the decaying driftwood on the bar sent forth faint sickening exhalations. The feverishness of day and its fierce passions still filled the camp. Lights moved restlessly along the bank of the river, striking no answering reflection from its tawny current. Against the blackness of the pines the windows of the old loft above the express office stood out staringly bright; and through their curtainless panes the loungers below could see the forms of those who were even then deciding the fate of Tennessee. And above all this, etched on the dark firmament, rose the Sierra, remote and passionless, crowned with remoter passionless stars.

The trial of Tennessee was conducted as fairly as was consistent with a judge and jury who felt themselves to some extent obliged to justify, in their verdict, the previous irregularities of arrest and indictment. The law of Sandy Bar was implacable, but not vengeful. The excitement and personal feeling of the chase were over; with Tennessee safe in their hands, they were ready to listen patiently to any defense, which they were already satisfied was insufficient. There being no doubt in their own minds, they were willing to give the prisoner the benefit of any that might exist. Secure in the hypothesis that he ought to be hanged on general principles, they indulged him with more latitude of defense than his reckless hardihood seemed to ask. The Judge appeared to be more anxious than the prisoner, who, otherwise unconcerned, evidently took a grim pleasure in the responsibility he had created. "I don't take any hand in this yer game," had been his invariable but good-humored reply to all questions. The Judge—who was also his captor—for a moment vaguely regretted that he had not shot him "on sight" that morning, but presently dismissed this human weakness as unworthy of the judicial mind. Nevertheless when there was a tap at the door, and it was said that Tennessee's Partner was there on behalf of the prisoner, he was admitted at once without question. Perhaps the younger members of the jury, to whom the proceedings were becoming irksomely thoughtful, hailed him as a relief.

For he was not, certainly, an imposing figure. Short and stout, with a square face, sunburned into a preternatural redness, clad in a loose duck "jumper" and trousers streaked and splashed with red soil, his aspect under any circumstances would have been quaint, and was now even ridiculous. As he stooped to deposit at his feet a heavy carpetbag he was carrying, it became obvious, from partially developed legends and inscriptions, that the material with which his trousers had been patched had been originally intended for a less ambitious covering. Yet he advanced with great gravity, and after shaking the hand of each person in the room with labored cordiality, he wiped his serious, perplexed face on a red bandana handkerchief, a shade lighter than his complexion, laid his powerful hand upon the table to steady himself, and thus addressed the Judge:—

"I was passin' by," he began, by way of apology, "and I thought I'd just step in and see how things was gittin' on with Tennessee thar,— my pardner. It's a hot night. I disremember any sich weather before on the Bar."

He paused a moment, but nobody volunteering any other meteorological recollection, he again had recourse to his pocket-handkerchief, and for some moments mopped his face diligently.

"Have you anything to say on behalf of the prisoner?" said the Judge finally.

"Thet's it," said Tennessee's Partner, in a tone of relief. "I come yar as Tennessee's pardner,— knowing him nigh on four year, off and on, wet and dry, in luck and out o' luck. His ways ain't aller my ways, but thar ain't any p'ints in that young man, thar ain't any liveliness as he's been up to, as I don't know. And you sez to me, sez you,—confidential-like, and between man and man,— sez you, 'do you know anything in his behalf?' and I sez to you, sez I,— confidential-like, as between man and man,— 'what should a man know of his pardner?' "

"Is this all you have to say?" asked the judge impatiently, feeling, perhaps, that a dangerous sympathy of humor was beginning to humanize the court.

"Thet's so," continued Tennessee's Partner. "It ain't for me to say anything agin' him. And now, what's the case? Here's Tennessee wants money, wants it bad, and doesn't like to ask it of his old pardner. Well, what does Tennessee do? He lays for a stranger, and he fetches that stranger; and you lays for *him*, and you fetches *him;* and the honors is easy. And I put it to you, bein' a fa'r-minded man, and to you, gentlemen all, as fa'r-minded men, ef this is n't so."

"Prisoner," said the Judge, interrupting, "have you any question to ask this man?"

"No! no!" continued Tennessee's Partner hastily. "I play this yer hand alone. To come down to the bed-rock, it's just this: Tennessee, thar, has played it pretty rough and expensive-like on a stranger, and on this yer camp. And now, what's the fair thing? Some would say more, some would say less. Here's seventeen hundred dollars in coarse gold and a watch,— it's about all my pile,— and call it square!" And before a hand could be raised to prevent him, he had emptied the contents of the carpetbag upon the table.

For a moment his life was in jeopardy. One or two men sprang to their feet, several hands groped for hidden weapons, and a suggestion to "throw him from the window" was only overridden by a gesture from the Judge. Tennessee laughed. And apparently oblivious of the excitement, Tennessee's Partner improved the opportunity to mop his face again with his handkerchief.

When order was restored, and the man was made to understand, by the use of forcible figures and rhetoric, that Tennessee's offense could not be condoned by money, his face took a more serious and sanguinary hue, and those who were nearest to him noticed that his rough hand trembled slightly on the table. He hesitated a moment as he slowly returned the gold to the carpetbag, as if he had not yet entirely caught the elevated sense of justice which swayed the tribunal, and was perplexed with the belief that he had not offered enough. Then he turned to the Judge, and saying, "This yer is a lone hand, played alone, and without my pardner," he bowed to the jury and was about to withdraw, when the Judge called him back:—

"If you have anything to say to Tennessee, you had better say it now."

For the first time that evening the eyes of the prisoner and his strange advocate met. Tennessee smiled, showed his white teeth, and saying, "Euchred, old man!" held out his hand. Tennessee's Partner took it in his own, and saying, "I just dropped in as I was passin' to see how things was gettin' on," let the hand passively fall, and adding that "it was a warm night," again mopped his face with his handkerchief, and without another word withdrew.

The two men never again met each other alive. For the unparalleled insult of a bribe offered to Judge Lynch—who, whether bigoted, weak, or narrow, was at least incorruptible—firmly fixed in the mind of that mythical personage any wavering determination of Tennessee's fate; and at the break of day he was marched, closely guarded, to meet it at the top of Marley's Hill.

How he met it, how cool he was, how he refused to say anything, how perfect were the arrangements of the committee, were all duly reported, with the addition of a warning moral and example to all future evil-doers, in the "Red Dog Clarion," by its editor, who was present, and to whose vigorous English I cheerfully refer the reader. But the beauty of that midsummer morning, the blessed amity of earth and air and sky, the awakened life of the free woods and hills, the joyous renewal and promise of Nature, and above all, the infinite serenity that thrilled through each, was not reported, as not being a part of the social lesson. And yet, when the weak and foolish deed was done, and a life, with its possibilities and responsibilities, had passed out of the misshapen thing that dangled between earth and sky, the birds sang, the flowers bloomed, the sun shone, as cheerily as before; and possibly the "Red Dog Clarion" was right.

Tennessee's Partner was not in the group that surrounded the ominous tree. But as they turned to disperse, attention was drawn to the singular appearance of a motionless donkey-cart halted at the side of the road. As they approached, they at once recognized the venerable "Jenny" and the two-wheeled cart as the property of Tennessee's Partner, used by him in carrying dirt from his claim; and a few paces distant the owner of the equipage himself, sitting under a buckeye-tree, wiping the perspiration from his glowing face. In answer to an inquiry, he said he had come for the body of the "diseased," "if it was all the same to the committee." He did n't wish to "hurry anything"; he could "wait." He was not working that day; and when the gentlemen were done with the "diseased," he would take him. "Ef thar is any present," he added, in his simple, serious way, "as would care to jine in the fun'l, they kin come." Perhaps it was from a sense of humor, which I have already intimated was a feature of Sandy Bar,—perhaps it was from something even better than that, but two thirds of the loungers accepted the invitation at once.

It was noon when the body of Tennessee was delivered into the hands of his partner. As the cart drew up to the fatal tree, we noticed that it contained a rough oblong box,—apparently made from a section of sluicing,— and half filled with bark and the tassels of pine. The cart was further decorated with slips of willow and made fragrant with buckeye-blossoms. When the body was deposited in the box, Tennessee's Partner drew over it a piece of tarred canvas, and gravely mounting the narrow seat in front, with his feet upon the shafts, urged the little donkey forward. The equipage moved slowly on, at that decorous pace which was habitual with Jenny even under less solemn circumstances. The men—half curiously, half jestingly, but all good-humoredly—strolled along beside the cart, some in advance, some a little in the rear of the homely catafalque. But whether from the narrowing of the road or some present sense of decorum, as the cart passed on, the company fell to the rear in couples, keeping step, and otherwise assuming the external show of a formal procession. Jack Folinsbee, who had at the outset played a funeral march in dumb show upon an imaginary trombone, desisted from a lack of sympathy and appreciation,— not having, perhaps, your true humorist's capacity to be content with the enjoyment of his own fun.

The way led through Grizzly Cañon, by this time clothed in funereal drapery and shadows. The redwoods, burying their moccasined feet in the red soil, stood in Indian file along the track, trailing an uncouth benediction from their bending boughs upon the passing bier. A hare, surprised into helpless inactivity, sat upright and pulsating in the ferns by the roadside as the cortège went by. Squirrels hastened to gain a secure outlook from higher boughs; and the bluejays, spreading their wings, fluttered before them like outriders, until the outskirts of Sandy Bar were reached, and the solitary cabin of Tennessee's Partner.

Viewed under more favorable circumstances, it would not have been a cheerful place. The unpicturesque site, the rude and unlovely outlines, the unsavory details, which distinguished the nest-building of the California miner, were all here with the dreariness of decay superadded. A few paces from the cabin there was a rough inclosure, which, in the brief days of Tennessee's Partner's matrimonial felicity, had been used as a garden, but was now overgrown with fern. As we approached it, we were surprised to find that what we had taken for a recent attempt at cultivation was the broken soil about an open grave.

The cart was halted before the inclosure, and rejecting the offers of assistance with the same air of simple self-reliance he had displayed throughout, Tennessee's Partner lifted the rough coffin on his back, and deposited it unaided within the shallow grave. He then nailed down the board which served as a lid, and mounting the little mound of earth beside it, took off his hat and slowly mopped his face with his handkerchief. This the crowd felt was a preliminary to speech, and they disposed themselves variously on the stumps and boulders, and sat expectant.

"When a man," began Tennessee's Partner slowly, "has been running free all day, what's the natural thing for him to do? Why, to come home. And if he ain't in a condition to go home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home. And here's Tennessee has been running free, and we brings him home from his wandering." He paused and picked up a fragment of quartz, rubbed it thoughtfully on his sleeve, and went on: "It ain't the first time that I've packed him on my back, as you seed me now. It ain't the first time that I brought him to this yer cabin when he couldn't help himself; it ain't the first time that I and Jinny have waited for him on yon hill, and picked him up and so fetched him home, when he couldn't speak and didn't know me. And now that it's the last time, why"— he paused and rubbed the quartz gently on his sleeve —"you see it's sort of rough on his pardner. And now, gentlemen," he added abruptly, picking up his long-handled shovel, "the fun'l's over; and my thanks, and Tennessee's thanks, to you for your trouble."

Resisting any proffers of assistance, he began to fill in the grave, turning his back upon the crowd, that after a few moments' hesitation gradually withdrew. As they crossed the little ridge that hid Sandy Bar from view, some, looking back, thought they could see Tennessee's Partner, his work done, sitting upon the grave, his shovel between his knees, and his face buried in his red bandana handkerchief. But it was argued by others that you couldn't tell his face from his handkerchief at that distance, and this point remained undecided.

In the reaction that followed the feverish excitement of that day, Tennessee's Partner was not forgotten. A secret investigation had cleared him of any complicity in Tennessee's guilt, and left only a suspicion of his general sanity. Sandy Bar made a point of calling on him, and proffering various uncouth but well-meant kindnesses. But from that day his rude health and great strength seemed visibly to decline; and when the rainy season fairly set in, and the tiny grass-blades were beginning to peep from the rocky mound above Tennessee's grave, he took to his bed.

One night, when the pines beside the cabin were swaying in the storm and trailing their slender fingers over the roof, and the roar and rush of the swollen river were heard below, Tennessee's Partner lifted his head from the pillow, saying, "It is time to go for Tennessee; I must put Jinny in the cart"; and would have risen from his bed but for the restraint of his attendant. Struggling, he still pursued his singular fancy: "There, now, steady, Jinny,— steady, old girl. How dark it is! Look out for the ruts,— and look out for him, too, old gal. Sometimes, you know, when he's blind drunk, he drops down right in the trail. Keep on straight up to the pine on the top of the hill. Thar! I told you so! — thar he is,— coming this way, too,— all by himself, sober, and his face a-shining. Tennessee! Pardner!"

And so they met.

Bret Harte

GRIZZLY

Coward,— of heroic size,
In whose lazy muscles lies
Strength we fear and yet despise;
Savage,— whose relentless tusks
Are content with acorn husks;
Robber,— whose exploits ne'er soared
O'er the bee's or squirrel's hoard;
Whiskered chin, and feeble nose,

Claws of steel on baby toes,—
Here, in solitude and shade,
Shambling, shuffling plantigrade,
Be thy courses undismayed!

Here, where nature makes thy bed,
Let thy rude, half-human tread
  Point to hidden Indian springs,
Lost in ferns and fragrant grasses,
  Hovered o'er by timid wings,
Where the wood-duck lightly passes,
Where the wild bee holds her sweets,—
Epicurean retreats,
Fit for thee, and better than
Fearful spoils of dangerous man.

In thy fat-jowled deviltry
Friar Tuck shall live in thee;
Thou may'st levy tithe and dole;
  Thou shalt spread the woodland cheer,
From the pilgrim taking toll;
  Match thy cunning with his fear;
Eat, and drink, and have thy fill;
Yet remain an outlaw still!

Bret Harte

DICKENS IN CAMP

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
    The river sang below;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
    Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humor, painted
    The ruddy tints of health

On haggard face and form that drooped and fainted
In the fierce race for wealth;

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands of listless leisure
To hear the tale anew;

And then, while round them shadows gathered faster,
And as the twilight fell,
He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of "Little Nell."

Perhaps 't was boyish fancy,—for the reader
Was youngest of them all,—
But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall;

The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,
While the whole camp with "Nell" on English meadows,
Wandered and lost their way.

And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken
As by some spell divine—
Their cares dropped from them like the needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire;
And he who wrought that spell?—
Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell!

Lost is that camp! but let its fragrant story
Blend with the breath that thrills
With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on that grave where English oak and holly
    And laurel wreaths entwine,
Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly,
    This spray of Western pine!

Bret Harte

Joaquin Miller (1842-1913)

KIT CARSON'S RIDE

Room! room to turn round in, to breathe and be free,
To grow to be giant, to sail as at sea
With the speed of the wind on a steed with his mane
To the wind, without pathway or route or a rein.
Room! room to be free where the white border'd sea
Blows a kiss to a brother as boundless as he;
Where the buffalo come like a cloud on the plain,
Pouring on like the tide of a storm-driven main,
And the lodge of the hunter to friend or to foe
Offers rest; and unquestion'd you come or you go.
My plains of America! Seas of wild lands!
From a land in the seas in a raiment of foam,
That has reached to a stranger the welcome of home,
I turn to you, lean to you, lift you my hands.

"Run? Run? See this flank, sir, and I do love him so!
But he's blind, badger blind. Whoa, Pache, boy, whoa.
No, you would n't believe it to look at his eyes,
But he's blind, badger blind, and it happen'd this wise:

"We lay in the grass and the sunburnt clover
That spread on the ground like a great brown cover
Northward and southward, and west and away
To the Brazos, where our lodges lay,
One broad and unbroken level of brown.
We were waiting the curtains of night to come down
To cover us trio and conceal our flight
With my brown bride, won from an Indian town
That lay in the rear the full ride of a night.

"We lounged in the grass—her eyes were in mine,
And her hands on my knee, and her hair was as wine
In its wealth and its flood, pouring on and all over
Her bosom wine red, and press'd never by one.
Her touch was as warm as the tinge of the clover
Burnt brown as it reach'd to the kiss of the sun.
Her words they were low as the lute-throated dove,
And as laden with love as the heart when it beats
In its hot, eager answer to earliest love,
Or the bee hurried home by its burthen of sweets.

"We lay low in the grass on the broad plain levels,
Old Revels and I, and my stolen brown bride;
'Forty full miles if a foot to ride!
Forty full miles if a foot, and the devils
Of red Comanches are hot on the track
When once they strike it. Let the sun go down
Soon, very soon,' muttered bearded old Revels
As he peer'd at the sun, lying low on his back,
Holding fast to his lasso. Then he jerk'd at his steed
And he sprang to his feet, and glanced swiftly around,
And then dropp'd, as if shot, with an ear to the ground;
Then again to his feet, and to me, to my bride,
While his eyes were like flame, his face like a shroud,
His form like a king, and his beard like a cloud,
And his voice loud and shrill, as both trumpet and reed,—
'Pull, pull in your lassoes, and bridle to steed,
And speed you if ever for life you would speed.
Aye, ride for your lives, for your lives you must ride!
For the plain is aflame, the prairie on fire,
And the feet of wild horses hard flying before
I heard like a sea breaking high on the shore,
While the buffalo come like a surge of the sea,
Driven far by the flame, driving fast on us three
As a hurricane comes, crushing palms in his ire.'

"We drew in the lassoes, seized saddle and rein,
Threw them on, cinched them on, cinched them over again,
And again drew the girth; and spring we to horse,
With head to the Brazos, with a sound in the air
Like the surge of a sea, with a flash in the eye,
From that red wall of flame reaching up to the sky;
A red wall of flame and a black rolling sea
Rushing fast upon us, as the wind sweeping free
And afar from the desert blown hollow and hoarse.

"Not a word, not a wail from a lip was let fall,
We broke not a whisper, we breathed not a prayer,
There was work to be done, there was death in the air,
And the chance was as one to a thousand for all.

Twenty miles! . . . thirty miles! . . . a dim distant speck . . .
Then a long reaching line, and the Brazos in sight!
And I rose in my seat with a shout of delight.
I stood in my stirrup, and look'd to my right—
But Revels was gone; I glanced by my shoulder
And saw his horse stagger; I saw his head drooping
Hard down on his breast, and his naked breast stooping
Low down to the mane, as so swifter and bolder
Ran reaching out for us the red-footed fire.
He rode neck to neck with a buffalo bull,
That made the earth shake where he came in his course,
The monarch of millions, with shaggy mane full
Of smoke and of dust, and it shook with desire
Of battle, with rage and with bellowings hoarse.
His keen, crooked horns, through the storm of his mane,
Like black lances lifted and lifted again;
And I looked but this once, for the fire licked through,
And Revels was gone, as we rode two and two.

"I look'd to my left then—and nose, neck, and shoulder
Sank slowly, sank surely, till back to my thighs,
And up through the black blowing veil of her hair
Did beam full in mine her two marvelous eyes,
With a longing and love yet a look of despair
And of pity for me, as she felt the smoke fold her,
And flames leaping far for her glorious hair.
Her sinking horse falter'd, plunged, fell and was gone
As I reach'd through the flame and I bore her still on.
On! into the Brazos, she, Pache and I—
Poor, burnt, blinded Pache. I love him . . . That's why."

Joaquin Miller

COLUMBUS

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores;
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone,
Brave Adm'r'l, speak; what shall I say?"
"Why, say: 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly, wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day:
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.

These very winds forget their way,
  For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Adm'r'l, speak and say—"
  He said: "Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
  "This mad sea shows his teeth tonight.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
  He lifts his teeth, as if to bite!
Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word:
  What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
  "Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then pale and worn, he paced his deck,
  And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—
  A light! A light! At last a light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
  It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
  Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

Joaquin Miller

Eugene Field (1850-1895)

IN THE FIRELIGHT

The fire upon the hearth is low,
And there is stillness everywhere,
While like winged spirits, here and there,
The firelight shadows fluttering go.
And as the shadows round me creep,
A childish treble breaks the gloom,
And softly from a further room
Comes, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

And somehow, with that little prayer
And that sweet treble in my ears,
My thoughts go back to distant years
And linger with a loved one there,
And as I hear my child's amen,
My mother's faith comes back to me,—
Crouched at her side I seem to be,
And Mother holds my hands again.

Oh, for an hour in that dear place!
Oh, for the peace of that dear time!
Oh, for that childish trust sublime!
Oh, for a glimpse of Mother's face!
Yet, as the shadows round me creep,
I do not seem to be alone,—
Sweet magic of that treble tone,
And "Now I lay me down to sleep."

Eugene Field

DUTCH LULLABY

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
  Sailed off in a wooden shoe—
Sailed on a river of crystal light
  Into a sea of dew.
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
  The old moon asked the three.
"We have come to fish for the herring-fish
  That live in this beautiful sea;
  Nets of silver and gold have we!"
                Said Wynken,
                Blynken,
                And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
  As they rocked in the wooden shoe,
And the wind that sped them all night long
  Ruffled the waves of dew;
The little stars were the herring-fish
  That lived in that beautiful sea.
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish—
  But never afeard are we";
  So cried the stars to the fishermen three,
                Wynken,
                Blynken,
                And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
  To the stars in the twinkling foam—
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
  Bringing the fishermen home;
'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
  As if it could not be;
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed

Of sailing that beautiful sea;
But I shall name you the fishermen three:
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle-bed;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock on the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three,—
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

Eugene Field

LITTLE BOY BLUE

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So, toddling off to his trundle-bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys;

And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
  Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
  But the little toy friends are true!

Aye, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
  Each in the same old place—
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
  The smile of a little face;
And they wonder, as waiting the long years through
  In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
  Since he kissed them and put them there.

Eugene Field

James Whitcomb Riley (1849-1916)

AFTERWHILES

Where are they—the Afterwhiles—
Luring us the lengthening miles
Of our lives? Where is the dawn
With the dew across the lawn
Stroked with eager feet the far
Way the hills and valleys are?
Where the sun that smites the frown
Of the eastward-gazer down?
Where the rifted wreaths of mist
O'er us, tinged with amethyst,
Round the mountain's steep defiles?
Where are all the afterwhiles?

Afterwhile—and we will go
Thither, yon, and to and fro—
From the stifling city streets
To the country's cool retreats—
From the riot to the rest
Where hearts beat the placidest;
Afterwhile, and we will fall
Under breezy trees, and loll
In the shade, with thirsty sight
Drinking deep the blue delight
Of the skies that will beguile
Us as children—afterwhile.

Afterwhile—and one intends
To be gentler to his friends—
To walk with them, in the hush
Of still evenings, o'er the plush
Of home-leading fields, and stand

Long at parting, hand in hand:
One, in time, will joy to take
New resolves for someone's sake,
And wear then the look that lies
Clear and pure in other eyes—
He will soothe and reconcile
His own conscience—afterwhile.

Afterwhile—we have in view
A far scene to journey to,—
Where the old home is, and where
The old mother waits us there,
Peering, as the time grows late,
Down the old path to the gate.—
How we'll click the latch that locks
In the pinks and hollyhocks,
And leap up the path once more
Where she waits us at the door!—
How we'll greet the dear old smile,
And the warm tears—afterwhile!

Ah, the endless afterwhiles!—
Leagues on leagues, and miles on miles,
In the distance far withdrawn,
Stretching on, and on, and on,
Till the fancy is footsore
And faints in the dust before
The last milestone's granite face,
Hacked with: Here Beginneth Space.
O far glimmering worlds and wings,
Mystic smiles and beckonings,
Lead us through the shadowy aisles,
Out into the afterwhiles.

James Whitcomb Riley

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THE RAGGEDY MAN

O The Raggedy Man! He works fer Pa;
An' he's the goodest man ever you saw!
He comes to our house every day,
An' waters the horses, an' feeds 'em hay;
An' he opens the shed—an' we all ist laugh
When he drives out our little old wobble-ly calf;
An' nen—ef our hired girl says he can—
He milks the cow fer 'Lizabuth Ann.—
  Ain't he a' awful good Raggedy Man?
    Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

W'y, The Raggedy Man—he's ist so good
He splits the kindlin' an' chops the wood;
An' nen he spades in our garden, too,
An' does most things 'at boys can't do.—
He clumbed clean up in our big tree
An' shooked a' apple down fer me—
An' nothern'n', too, fer 'Lizabuth Ann—
An' nother'n', too, fer The Raggedy Man.—
  Ain't he a' awful kind Raggedy Man?
    Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' The Raggedy Man one time says he
Pick' roast' rambos from a' orchurd-tree,
An' et 'em—all ist roast' an' hot!—
An' it's so, too!—'cause a corn-crib got
Afire one time an' all burn' down
On "The Smoot Farm," 'bout four mile from town—
On "The Smoot Farm"! Yes—an' the hired han'
'At worked there nen 'uz The Raggedy Man!—
  Ain't he the beatin'est Raggedy Man?
    Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

The Raggedy Man's so good an' kind
He'll be our "horsey," an' "haw" an' mind

Ever'thing 'at you make him do—
An' won't run off—'less you want him to!
I drived him wunst way down our lane
An' he got skeered, when it 'menced to rain,
An' ist rared up an' squealed and run
Purt 'nigh away!—an' it's all in fun!
Nen he skeered *ag'in* at a' old tin can . . .
Whoa! y' old runaway Raggedy Man!
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' The Raggedy Man, he knows most rhymes,
An' tells 'em, ef I be good, sometimes:
Knows 'bout Giunts, an' Griffuns, an' Elves,
An' the Squidgicum-Squees 'at swallers the'rselves!
An', wite by the pump in our pasture-lot,
He showed me the hole 'at the Wunks is got,
'At lives 'way deep in the ground, an' can
Turn into me, er 'Lizabuth Ann!
Er Ma, er Pa, er The Raggedy Man!
Ain't he a funny old Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' wunst, when The Raggedy Man come late,
An' pigs ist root' thue the garden-gate,
He 'tend like the pigs 'uz *bears* an' said,
"Old Bear-shooter 'ill shoot 'em dead!"
An' race an' chase' 'em, an' they'd ist run
When he pint his hoe at 'em like it's a gun
An' go "Bang!—Bang!" nen 'tend he stan'
An' load up his gun ag'in! Raggedy Man!
He's an old Bear-shooter Raggedy Man!
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' sometimes The Raggedy Man lets on
We're little *prince*-children, an' old King's gone
To git more money, an' lef' us there—

And *Robbers* is ist thick ever'where;
An' nen—ef we all won't cry, fer *shore*—
The Raggedy Man he'll come and "'splore
The Castul-halls," an' steal the "gold"—
An' steal *us*, too, an' grab an' hold
An' pack us off to his old "Cave"!—An'
  Haymow's the "cave" o' The Raggedy Man!—
    Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

The Raggedy Man—one time, when he
Was makin' a little bow-'n'-orry fer me,
Says "When you're big like your Pa is,
Air *you* go' to keep a fine store like his—
An' be a rich merchunt—an' wear fine clothes?—
Er what *air* you go' to be, goodness knows!"
An' nen he laughed at 'Lizabuth Ann,
An' I says "'M go' to be a Raggedy Man!—
  I'm ist go' to be a nice Raggedy Man!"
    Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

James Whitcomb Riley

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William Vaughn Moody (1869-1910)

GLOUCESTER MOORS

A mile behind is Gloucester town
Where the fishing fleets put in,
A mile ahead the land dips down
And the woods and farms begin.
Here, where the moors stretch free
In the high blue afternoon,
Are the marching sun and talking sea,
And the racing winds that wheel and flee
On the flying heels of June.

Jill-o'er-the-ground is purple blue,
Blue is the quaker-maid,
The wild geranium holds its dew
Long in the boulder's shade.
Wax-red hangs the cup
From the huckleberry boughs,
In barberry bells the grey moths sup,
Or where the choke-cherry lifts high up
Sweet bowls for their carouse.

Over the shelf of the sandy cove
Beach-peas blossom late.
By copse and cliff the swallows rove
Each calling to his mate.
Seaward the sea-gulls go,
And the land-birds all are here;
That green-gold flash was a vireo,
And yonder flame where the marsh-flags grow
Was a scarlet tanager.

This earth is not the steadfast place
We landsmen build upon;

From deep to deep she varies pace,
And while she comes is gone.
Beneath my feet I feel
Her smooth bulk heave and dip;
With velvet plunge and soft upreel
She swings and steadies to her keel
Like a gallant, gallant ship.

These summer clouds she sets for sail,
The sun is her masthead light,
She tows the moon like a pinnace frail
Where her phosphor wake churns bright.
Now hid, now looming clear,
On the face of the dangerous blue
The star fleets tack and wheel and veer,
But on, but on does the old world steer
As if her port she knew.

God, dear God! Does she know her port,
Though she goes so far about?
Or blind astray, does she make her sport
To brazen and chance it out?
I watched when her captains passed:
She were better captainless.
Men in the cabin, before the mast,
But some were reckless and some aghast,
And some sat gorged at mess.

By her battened hatch I leaned and caught
Sounds from the noisome hold,—
Cursing and sighing of souls distraught
And cries too sad to be told.
Then I strove to go down and see;
But they said, "Thou art not of us!"
I turned to those on the deck with me

And cried, "Give help!" But they said, "Let be:
Our ship sails faster thus."

Jill-o'er-the-ground is purple blue,
Blue is the quaker-maid,
The alder-clump where the brook comes through
Breeds cresses in its shade.
To be out of the moiling street
With its swelter and its sin!
Who has given to me this sweet,
And given my brother dust to eat?
And when will his wage come in?

Scattering wide or blown in ranks,
Yellow and white and brown,
Boats and boats from the fishing banks
Come home to Gloucester town.
There is cash to purse and spend,
There are wives to be embraced,
Hearts to borrow and hearts to lend,
And hearts to take and keep to the end,—
O little sails, make haste!

But thou, vast outbound ship of souls,
What harbor town for thee?
What shapes, when thy arriving tolls,
Shall crowd the banks to see?
Shall all the happy shipmates then
Stand singing brotherly?
Or shall a haggard ruthless few
Warp her over and bring her to,
While the many broken souls of men
Fester down in the slaver's pen,
And nothing to say or do?

William Vaughn Moody

THE NOTES

Rip Van Winkle (Irving)

INTRODUCTORY:

Irving was living in England when he wrote ***The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon.*** In 1819 he sent the manuscript to New York in separate sections to be published serially. In the first number, published in May, there were five sketches, of which "Rip Van Winkle" was the last. Irving's sources for this tale were partly local traditions about Henry Hudson and his crew, and about Indian legends concerning the spirits that dwell in the Catskills. The long-sleep device has been frequently used in romance and fairy lore. "The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus" is an old Latin medieval legend telling how seven Christians slept in a cave for three hundred and sixty years. In the French fairy tale of "Rosebud, or The Sleeping Beauty," the young princess sleeps one hundred years until she is wakened by the kiss of a prince. In Ludwig Tieck's "The Elves," the little girl Mary sleeps seven years. But Irving's sources, as he himself hints in the note at the end of the story, were the legends concerning the tales about Emperor Frederick I, or Barbarossa, and the Kyffhäuser, or the Kyffhäuser Mountain, legends. The principal Harz Mountain legend is that told by Johann Karl Nachtigal, who, under the pseudonym of Otmar, published *Folks-sagen* or "Popular Traditions of the Harz Mountains" in 1800. Irving probably saw this in the original German when he was studying that language during his first trip abroad. In order that it may be seen exactly how an author may use a source, we give here Thomas Roscoe's translation of "Peter Klaus," which appeared in 1826, seven years later than Irving's story.

PETER KLAUS, THE GOATHERD

In the village of Sittendorf at the foot of a mountain lived Peter Klaus, a goatherd, who was in the habit of pasturing his flock upon the Kyffhauser hills. Towards evening he generally let them browze upon a green plot not far off, surrounded with an old ruined wall from which he could take a muster of his whole flock.

For some days past he had observed that one of the prettiest goats, soon after its arrival at this spot, usually disappeared, nor joined the fold again until late in the evening. He watched her again and again, and at last found that she slipped through a gap in the old wall, whither he followed her. It led into a passage which widened, as he went, into a cavern; and here he saw the goat employed in picking up the oats that fell through some crevices in the place above. He looked up, shook his ears at this odd shower of corn, but could discover nothing. Where the deuce could it come from? At length he heard over his head the neighing and stamping of horses; he listened, and concluded that the oats must have fallen through the manger when they were fed. The poor goatherd was sadly puzzled what to think of these horses in this uninhabited part of the mountain, but so it was, for the groom, making his appearance, without saying a word beckoned him to follow him. Peter obeyed, and followed him up some steps which brought him into an open courtyard surrounded by old walls. At the side of this was a still more spacious cavern, surrounded by rocky heights which only admitted a kind of twilight through the overhanging trees and shrubs.

He went on, and came to a smooth shaven green, where he saw twelve ancient knights none of whom spoke a word, engaged in playing nine pins. His guide now beckoned to Peter in silence, to pick up the nine pins, and went his way. Trembling in every joint Peter did not venture to disobey, and at times cast a stolen glance at the players, whose long beards and slashed doublets were not at all in the present fashion. By degrees his looks grew bolder; he took particular notice of everything round him; among other things, observing a tankard near him filled with wine, whose odour was excellent, he took a good draught. It seemed to inspire him with life; and whenever he began to feel tired of running, he applied with fresh ardour to the tankard, which always renewed his strength. But finally it quite overpowered him, and he fell asleep.

When he next opened his eyes, he found himself on the grass-plot again, in the old spot where he was in the habit of feeding his goats. He rubbed his eyes, he looked round, but could see neither dog nor flock; he was surprised at the long, rank grass that grew about him, and at the trees and bushes which he had never before seen. He shook his head and walked a little farther, looking for the old sheep path and the hillocks and roads where he used daily to drive his flock; but he could find no traces of them left. Yet he saw the village just before him; it was the same Sittendorf, and scratching his head, he hastened at a quick pace down the hill to enquire after his flock.

All the people whom he met going into the place were strangers to him, were differently dressed, and even spoke in a different style from his old neighbors. When he asked about his goats, they only stared at him, and fixed their eyes upon his chin. He put his hand unconsciously to his mouth, and to his great surprise found that he had got a beard, at least a foot long. He now began to think that both he and all the world about him were in a dream: and yet he knew the mountain for that of Kyffhausen (for he had just come down it) well enough. And there were the cottages with their gardens and grass-plots, much as he had left them. Besides, the lads who had all collected around him answered to the enquiry of a passenger, what place it was, "Sittendorf, Sir."

Still shaking his head, he went farther into the village to look for his own house. He found it, but greatly altered for the worse; a strange goatherd in an old tattered frock lay before the door, and near him his old dog, which growled and showed its teeth at Peter when he called him. He went through the entrance which had once been a door, but all within was empty and deserted. Peter staggered like a drunken man out of the house, and called for his wife and children by their names. But no one heard him, and no one gave him any answer.

Soon, however, a crowd of women and children got round the inquisitive stranger with the long, hoary beard, and asked him what it was he wanted. Now Peter thought it was such a strange kind of thing to stand before his own house, enquiring for his own wife and children, as well as about himself, that evading these enquiries he pronounced the first name that came into his head: "Kurt Steffen, the blacksmith." Most of the spectators were silent, and only looked at him wistfully, till an old woman at last said: "Why, for these twelve years he has been at Sachsenburg, whence, I suppose you are not come to-day." "Where is Valentine Meier, the tailor?" "The Lord rest his soul," cried another old woman leaning upon her crutch, "he has been lying more than these fifteen years in a house he will never leave."

Peter recognized in the speakers two of his young neighbors who seemed to have grown old very suddenly, but he had no inclination to enquire any farther. At this moment there appeared making her way through the crowd of spectators a sprightly young woman with a year-old baby in her hand, all three as like his wife he was seeking for as possible. "What are your names?" he enquired in a tone of great surprise. "Mine is Maria." "And your father's?" continued Peter. "God rest his soul! Peter Klaus to be sure. It is now twenty years ago since we were all looking for him day and night upon the Kiffhausen; for his flock came home without him, and I was then," continued the woman, "only seven years old."

> The goatherd could no longer bear this: "I am Peter Klaus," he said, "Peter and no other," and he took his daughter's child and kissed it. The spectators appeared struck dumb with astonishment, until first one and then another began to say, "Yes, indeed, this is Peter Klaus! Welcome, good neighbor, after twenty years of absence, welcome home."

According to Lowell, a literary idea belongs to him at last who says it best, and so the whole series of tales dealing with long sleeps is now dominated by Irving's "Rip Van Winkle." So well known has Rip become through Irving's story and through Joseph Jefferson's dramatization of it that the very name has become a synonym for a sleepy old fellow who is about twenty years behind the times.

EXPLANATORY:

1. *thylke.* That same; an old word composed of *the* and *ilk*, the (or that) same.

1. *Cartwright.* William Cartwright, an English playwright of the early seventeenth century.

1 : 2. *Knickerbocker.* Irving said the name was compounded from *Knicker*, to nod, and *bocker*, books, or one who nods over his books.

1 : 27. *"more in sorrow than in anger." Hamlet*, I: ii.

1 : 33. *Waterloo Medal, or a Queen Anne's Farthing.* The Waterloo medals were given to the British soldiers who fought in the battle of Waterloo, and the Queen Anne's farthing was a coin supposed to be of great rarity. The joke on the hard Dutch cakes is evident.

1 : 35. *Kaatskill Mountains.* Why does Irving use this old spelling? The word *kill* means creek or river, as in Schuylkill.

2 : 50. *a village.* When a young boy wrote to Irving asking him whether it was the village of Catskill or Kingston, the author playfully replied that he could find nothing in Mr. Knickerbocker's manuscript to indicate which village was intended.

2 : 56. *Peter Stuyvesant.* Governor of the Dutch colony of New Netherlands from 1647 to 1664. See Irving's account of him in *Knickerbocker's History of New York.*

2 : 68. *Fort Christina.* The Swedish settlement near what is now Wilmington, Delaware. Stuyvesant captured it in 1655.

3 : 80. *termagant.* Formerly applied to a violent or overbearing person, but now only to a boisterous or quarreling woman. What is the meaning of *tolerable* in the next line?

3 : 84. *good wives.* Wife is used here in the generic sense of woman rather than specifically as a married woman.

4 : 131. *galligaskins.* Long, loose trousers.

6 : 185. *junto.* An organization for furthering some cause, especially of political intrigue.

9 : 293. *doublets . . . jerkins.* The doublet was a close-fitting outer garment with sleeves. The jerkin was a jacket or waistcoat.

9 : 303. *hanger.* A short broadsword worn hanging from the belt.

12 : 426. *an unkind cut.* "This was the most unkindest cut of all" (*Julius Cæsar*, III: ii).

13 : 442. *red night-cap.* This was used as a symbol of republicanism in the French Revolution. It has also been adopted in our image of the goddess of liberty, as may be seen in the engraving on our coins.

13 : 465. *Babylonish jargon.* An allusion to the tower of Babel (Genesis 11: 1–9).

14 : 475. *Federal or Democrat.* The Federalists were loose constructionists and the Democrats strict constructionists of the Constitution. Hamilton was a leading member of the Federal party, and Jefferson of the Democratic party.

15 : 507. *Stony Point.* A rocky promontory on the Hudson, captured by General Anthony Wayne in 1779.

15 : 508. *Antony's Nose.* Another promontory just north of Stony Point. Irving gives a humorous account of the naming of this promontory in *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, Book VI, chap. 4.

17 : 585. *the historian.* Adrian van der Donck, author of a Dutch history of New Netherlands.

17 : 593. *That it was affirmed.* In this and the next sentence the main predication is omitted. Supply the omission.

17 : 594. *Hendrick Hudson.* Henry Hudson, an English sailor in the service of the Dutch East India Company, in attempting to discover a northwest passage to India navigated the Hudson River and also discovered Hudson Bay. The *Half-moon* was the name of his ship. Why does Irving spell the name Hendrick?

19 : 659. *Frederick der Rothbart.* Frederick I of Germany, called Barbarossa, or Redbeard, died 1190. A legend arose to the effect that he was not dead but held spellbound in an underground castle, where he must remain as long as the ravens fly about the mountain.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

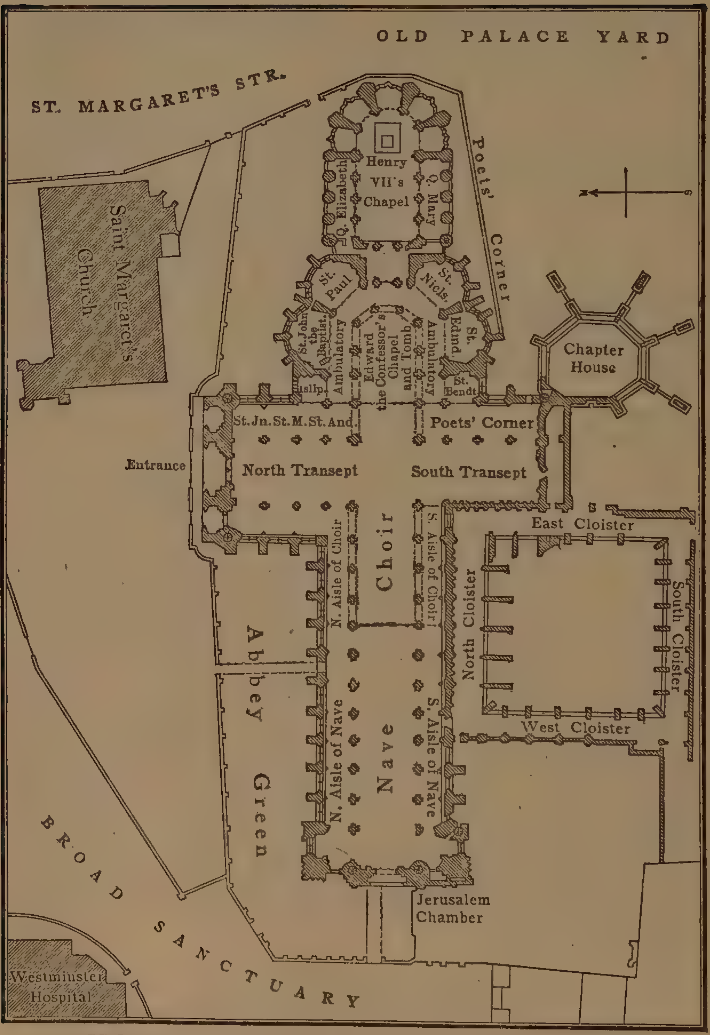
(1) What is the purpose of the introductory note about finding the manuscript of the story in Diedrich Knickerbocker's posthumous papers? How had Irving won fame under this pseudonym ten years before the appearance of the *Sketch Book?* (2) Examine also the note and the postscript at the end of the story. What is the chief value to the story of this framework of pretended notes from Mr. Knickerbocker? (3) With what element does Irving begin the story — setting, characters, or action? Is this a good way to begin a story like this? Why? (4) Why are the mountains spoken of as "barometers," "fairy mountains," and the like? (5) Why is Rip the first character to be introduced? (6) Give a full description of his appearance. (7) Discuss his character and habits, including his relations to his wife, his dog, his cronies, and others. (8) What humorous touches do you discover in Irving's treatment of Rip? (9) Is Rip well suited to play the part of a lackey or "subject" in the supernatural events which follow? Why? Do you think he might *want* to sleep twenty years? (10) Describe Dame Van Winkle's character. What light do Wolf's actions throw on this topic? (11) What does Dame Van Winkle's character have to do with the development of the narrative, that is, with the events which follow? (12) Why is the club or junto introduced? Are its members reverted to a little further on in the story? (13) At what point does the main action of the narrative begin? Note how many pages Irving has consumed in his leisurely introduction. Do most modern stories move so slowly as this? Do you think Irving is justified in making such a full analysis of characters before he begins the main action of the story? Explain why. (14) Notice that Irving gives a picture of the mountain scenery instead of recounting the details of Rip's day of hunting. Just why does he do this? Do you think the pictures are good? Compare these two paragraphs with the first two paragraphs for picturesque effects.

(15) Tell in your own words the peculiar happenings just as Rip started to descend the mountain. (16) Are the strange characters vividly presented? Tell just how they look to you. What historical period and what particular characters do they represent? (17) How much space does Irving devote to Rip after he fell asleep and before the awakening? Might a less skillful writer have filled in a page or so of description here to denote the passage of time? (18) How long did Rip think he had slept? (19) Is the waking natural? How does Irving manage to disclose the wonderful changes that had taken place in Rip and his surroundings? Note particularly the order in which things are taken up — the gun, the dog, the stiffness in Rip's joints, his hunger, and the like. (20) What things had apparently not changed during his sleep? Is this a natural touch? (21) Do you think it a little strange that Rip did not notice his long beard until he reached the village? Why is this point delayed? (22) Show just how the changes in the village are gradually disclosed. To what cause did Rip attribute his confusion? (23) What humorous and pathetic touches are found in the paragraphs describing Rip's visit to his own home? Was it Wolf or perhaps a dog like Wolf that snarled at him? (24) Does the name of the new keeper of the inn, now a hotel, sound like the previous Dutch names? Why this change? (25) What did Rip learn when he called for his old associates? (26) What ironical and humorous effect is produced when he asks if nobody knows Rip Van Winkle? (27) Who finally tells Rip that he went away twenty years ago? Was this the proper person to do it? Describe the recognition scene. (28) How did Rip spend his last days? (29) Go over the story now and point out its main divisions, thus making a complete outline. Notice first the setting; then the leisurely introductory description of characters; then the account of the hunting trip, which is the beginning of the narrative proper; next the strange party at ninepins; then Rip's sleep; his awakening; his return to the village; the recognition; and finally Rip's after life, as a conclusion. (30) In a second perusal do you see many natural hints or suggestive preparations for succeeding incidents? (31) Point out exact references to show the date and extent of time covered, and thus make a time outline of the story. (32) Point out five of the wittiest sayings in the story. (33) Make a study of "Peter Klaus" (see introductory note above) and determine just what Irving has taken, what he has left out, and what he has added in writing his own story. (34) Suggested composition subjects: Rip's Character; Comparison of the Humor of "Rip Van Winkle" with that of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"; write a story incorporating some local legend; Comparison of Joseph Jefferson's Dramatization with the Original Story; How Irving Used His Sources (see introductory note).

Westminster Abbey (Irving)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Westminster Abbey" was the first essay in the seventh and last number of the *Sketch Book* when it was published serially in 1819. It is a typical example of the informal or personal essay dealing with real scenes and their literary and historical associations. We call the essay personal because the author infuses into it a great deal of his


OLD PALACE YARD
ST. MARGARET'S STR.
Saint Margaret's Church
Henry VII's Chapel
Q. Elizabeth
Q. Mary
Poets' Corner
St. Paul
St. Nicls.
St. John the Baptist.
Ambulatory
Edward the Confessor's Chapel and Tomb
Ambulatory
St. Edmd.
Islip.
St. Bendt.
Chapter House
St. Jn. St. M. St. And.
Poets' Corner
Entrance
North Transept
South Transept
East Cloister
Choir
N. Aisle of Choir
S. Aisle of Choir
North Cloister
South Cloister
Abbey Green
N. Aisle of Nave
Nave
S. Aisle of Nave
West Cloister
BROAD SANCTUARY
Jerusalem Chamber
Westminster Hospital

GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY

own sentiment and emotion, or personality; and we call it informal because it is presented in the easy and natural style of one talking to us and giving us his own thoughts and experiences in an informal rather than a formal or dignified manner.

EXPLANATORY:

20. *Westminster Abbey.* The Abbey, or Cathedral, of St. Peter in Westminster, formerly a suburb of London, but now in the midst of the city. The Abbey was begun by Edward the Confessor in 1050 and completed after his death in 1066. In 1245 it was rebuilt by Henry VII, and it has since been added to from time to time. It is the first of the English cathedrals built on the cruciform plan, and it is also first in historic and literary interest. If possible, look up further facts about this famous old church.

20. *Christolero's Epigrams.* The correct title is *Chrestoleros: Seven Books of Epigrams*, by Thomas Bastard, 1598.

21 : 10. *Westminster School.* Also called St. Peter's College, one of the famous English boarding schools, refounded by Elizabeth in 1560.

21 : 15. *verger.* The official keeper of a cathedral; so called because he formerly carried the verge, or rod, signifying ecclesiastical authority.

22 : 45. *Vitalis. Abbas.*, etc. Names of ancient abbots now almost entirely forgotten.

23 : 89. *Poet's Corner.* In the south transept. Geoffrey Chaucer was buried here in 1400, probably because he was a favorite officer of the crown and had his dwelling within the confines of the cathedral. Since Cromwell's time others than royalty have been buried in the Abbey by way of special national recognition. Longfellow, whose bust is in Poets' Corner, is the only American honored by a memorial in the Abbey.

24 : 122. *cognizance.* A family badge or heraldic device.

24 : 127. *crosiers and mitres.* A crosier, or crozier, is a bishop's staff surmounted with a crook or a cross; a mitre, or miter, is a large ornamental headdress worn by bishops and other ecclesiastics.

24 : 131. *that fabled city.* On the seventeenth night of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment*, "The Story of the Eldest Lady (Zobeide)" relates the finding of a city with all the inhabitants petrified just as they were in real life.

24 : 134. *buckler . . . morion.* A shield . . . an open helmet.

25 : 171. *tomb of Mrs. Nightingale.* The French sculptor Roubillac (or Roubiliac) made several notable monuments in Westminster before his death in 1762. Irving accurately describes the bizarre statue in memory of Joseph Nightingale and his wife Elizabeth.

26 : 201. *Henry the Seventh's chapel.* At the east end of the Abbey, built about 1500 by Henry VII as a memorial and burial place for himself and his family.

27 : 256. *Elizabeth . . . Mary.* Look up the account of Queen Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots.

28 : 278. *"For in the silent grave,"* etc. Quoted from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Thierry and Theodoret*, IV.

29 : 311. *Edward the Confessor.* King of West-Saxons from 1042 to 1066. He was succeeded by Harold, who was overthrown by William of Normandy.

29 : 319. *"beds of darkness."* Echoing Job 17 : 13, "If I wait, the grave is mine house; I have made my bed in the darkness."

31 : 378. *Sir Thomas Brown(e).* An eminent English prose writer of the seventeenth century. This quotation and the one below are from *Hydriotaphia, or Urn Burial*, his most noted work.

31 : 389. *Cambyses . . . Mizraim . . . Pharaoh.* Cambyses III, king of Persia, conquered Egypt in the sixth century before Christ.

Mizraim is Hebrew for Egypt; it is also used as the name of one of Ham's sons (see Genesis 10:6). Pharaoh is a general name for the early kings of Egypt.

31 : 402. *a tale that is told.* From Psalms 90:9, "We spend our years as a tale that is told."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In what mood and from what mental point of view does Irving open this essay? How does the day harmonize with this mood? (2) Why is the first personal pronoun used so frequently throughout the essay? Is it objectionable? (3) Trace Irving's course through the Abbey by reference to the plate given on p. 494. (Note that he enters from the southwest. After passing through Westminster School and the cloisters, he reaches the Abbey proper, entering at the south transept door [see the sixth paragraph]. After giving the first general impressions, he passes on to Poets' Corner in the south transept. He then goes on around through the kings' tombs until he reaches the Nightingale tomb in the north transept. Then he wanders around from tomb to tomb and chapel to chapel until he comes to the great Henry VII's chapel in the east wing, to which, including the reflections on the noise of the outside world, he gives ten paragraphs. He stops at the magnificent shrine of Edward the Confessor in the very heart of the Abbey, and mounting this tomb, he takes a last general survey of the great mausoleum, and finally retraces his course and passes out at the south transept door. The conclusion draws some lessons on the emptiness of human renown and the fleetness of all-consuming time.) (4) The notable thing about the essay is the blending of vivid description with quiet musing or reverie. Point out some of the paragraphs which best bring out this blending, and read them aloud in the appropriate tone and movement. (5) Do you get a better idea of the Abbey from this essay than you could from a guide book? Why does Irving not give the history of the Abbey, its dimensions, its architectural details? (6) You might expect from Irving some touches of humor. Are there any in this essay? Why? (7) Read the paragraph on Poets' Corner, and test what is said about the influence of authors by applying it to Irving himself. (8) Give the general characteristics of Irving's style in this essay. (Simplicity, clearness, elegance, smoothness, grace, and melody; blending of sentiment and picturesqueness; dominant personal tone.) (9) Suggested themes for compositions: A Comparison of Irving's Visit to Westminster Abbey with That of Sir Roger de Coverley (*Spectator*, No. 26); Westminster Abbey: Its History and Architecture; A Visit to Our Local Cemetery.

The Last of the Mohicans (Cooper)

Chapter III (Hawk-eye, Chingachgook, and Uncas)

INTRODUCTORY:

The Last of the Mohicans, the best and most widely read of all Cooper's novels, was written in 1825 and was published early in 1826. It has since been reprinted in almost innumerable editions both for the general reader and for school use. The earlier editions contained many errors in syntax and infelicities of diction which were removed in later editions; in our text we have preferred to give the author the benefit of these improvements. Cooper's stories should be read and judged as wholes rather than by excerpts. The third chapter is here reprinted more to pique interest than to show Cooper at his best, though the selection is a good average sample of his style and is especially valuable in that it presents, largely through conversation, the three principal characters of the romance. After this selection has been studied carefully, the pupil should be encouraged to read the remainder of the story more as a pleasure than as a set task.

EXPLANATORY:

32. *Before these fields*, etc. Quoted from Bryant's "An Indian at the Burial Place of His Fathers." Cooper usually followed the custom of placing a quotation as a motto or headpiece to give a hint as to the contents of the chapter.

32 : 1. *Heyward and his confiding companions.* In the preceding chapter Major Heyward, who was intrusted with the duty of escorting Cora and Alice, the daughters of General Webb, from Fort Edward to Fort William Henry, was being led into an ambush by Magua, a treacherous Indian guide.

33 : 36. *chivalrous scalping tuft.* The North American warrior caused the hair to be plucked from his whole body; a small tuft only was left on the crown of his head in order that his enemy might avail himself of it in wrenching off the scalp in the event of his fall. The scalp was the only admissible trophy of victory. Thus, it was deemed more important to obtain the scalp than to kill the man. Some tribes lay great stress on the honor of striking a dead body. These practices have nearly disappeared among the Indians of the Atlantic States. (*Cooper.*)

33 : 53. *hunting-shirt.* The hunting-shirt is a picturesque smock frock, being shorter, and ornamented with fringes and tassels. The colors are intended to imitate the hues of the wood, with a view to concealment. Many corps of American riflemen have been thus attired, and the dress is one of the most striking of modern times. The hunting-shirt is frequently white. (*Cooper.*)

34 : 63. *rifle of great length.* The rifle of the army is short; that of the hunter is always long. (*Cooper.*)

34 : 74. *Chingachgook.* The Indian name means "big serpent." Pronounced chin-gă-gōōk′.

34 : 81. *the big river.* The Mississippi. The scout alludes to a tradition which is very popular among the tribes of the Atlantic states. Evidence of their Asiatic origin is deduced from the circumstances, though great uncertainty hangs over the whole history of the Indians. (*Cooper.*)

34 : 89. *Hawk-eye.* The name of the famous scout as given in *The Pioneers*, the first of the series of Leatherstocking Tales, is Natty Bumppo, Natty being an abbreviation of Nathaniel. In this first story he is also called Leatherstocking on account of his leather leggings, and in other tales he is given other appropriate names.

35 : 108. *wooden gun.* Bow and arrow.

35 : 111. *Iroquois.* This was a large federation of various Indian tribes living west of the Mohicans around lakes Erie and Ontario.

36 : 137. *Mohicans.* A part of the Algonkin or Delaware tribe. The Indian name Mohicanni or Mohegan means wolf. Cooper indicates in his introduction to *The Last of the Mohicans* that these eastern tribes were fast disappearing, and thus explains the title of his novel.

36 : 146. *water . . . sweet in the shade . . . bitter in the sun.* Hawk-eye is thinking of the difference between the sweet waters of the inland or shaded streams and the salty water of the ocean.

37 : 184. *Alligewi.* A traditional tribe often mentioned by the Algonkins as their predecessors in the occupation of central New York.

37 : 187. *Maquas.* Another name for the Mohawks, the enemies of the Algonkins.

37 : 192. *salt . . . licks.* Inland salt springs gave rise to salt licks, where the animals came to lick the ground to obtain salt. Cooper explains that these were famous spots for hunters to waylay their game.

38 : 221. *Sagamore.* An Indian name for chieftain.

39 : 261. *busy Frenchman.* So printed in the first edition, but frequently misprinted *bushy* in later editions.

41 : 316. *Six Nations.* That is, the Six (originally Five) Allied Nations of Indians who occupied the New York territory. Cooper gives a full note on them at the beginning of Chapter II.

41 : 324. *The horses of white men.* This was Major Heyward and his party approaching. In the next chapter the scout and his Indian friends perceive that Heyward and the two young ladies are being led into a trap by the treacherous Indian runner Magua. Read the entire story.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the principal function of this chapter (see the introductory note)? (2) What appropriateness do you see in the poetical motto at the head of the chapter? Do modern novelists ever use this device? (3) What is the rhetorical function of the first paragraph? Why are the words *unsuspecting*, *confiding*, *treacherous*, introduced here? (4) What topics are developed in the next three paragraphs? (5) The usual function of dialogue is to develop the situation, portray character, and propel the narrative or action of the story. Does the conversation in this chapter fulfill these functions adequately? (6) Give the substance of the first part of Hawk-eye's and Chingachgook's talk together. What does this section suggest to you in regard to the education of Hawk-eye? (7) Why is it wise to present rather fully the previous history and present troubles of the Mohicans? (8) Who was "the last of the Mohicans"? How is he brought on the scene? (9) What is said about the Maquas, and what has this to do with later developments in the story? (10) Describe the incident of the slaying of the deer by Uncas. (11) What is the function of the last incident in this chapter? Why does Hawk-eye mention the Iroquois in the very last sentence? (12) Study carefully the language put into the mouths of the characters. Is Cooper successful in preserving the peculiarities of the individuals and of the Indian language as it is traditionally reported to us? (13) Collect a list of peculiar metaphorical or interpretative expressions found in this chapter, such as "setting sun" for west, "salt lake" for the ocean, etc. (14) Explain the means by which the author arouses your interest in this chapter.

Thanatopsis (Bryant)

INTRODUCTORY:

This celebrated poem, now usually considered the first great poem written in America, was composed in its earlier form by Bryant in his seventeenth year (1811), but not published until 1817, when it appeared in the September number of the *North American Review*. Bryant's father found it in the young poet's desk and carried it to Mr. Willard Phillips, one of the three editors of the *North American Review*. When Phillips read the poem to his colleagues, Richard Henry Dana said, "Ah, Phillips, you have been imposed upon; no one on this side of the Atlantic is capable of writing such verses." The source of Bryant's interest in subjects of this kind is traceable to the so-called "graveyard" poems, such as Henry Kirke White's melancholy verse, Blair's "The Grave," Bishop Proteus' poem on "Death," and Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." In its original form the poem was shorter by seventeen lines at the beginning and sixteen at the end. Thus it will be seen that the germ or central thought of the poem begins abruptly in the middle of line 17, "Yet a few days," and ends similarly in the middle of line 66, "And make their bed with thee." The introductory and concluding lines were added when the poem was included in the first edition of Bryant's poems, published in 1821. Many verbal changes in both the original and the enlarged versions were made from time to time, and practically always for the better, so that we may well agree with Poe's statement that the poem owes a good part of its celebrity "to its nearly absolute freedom from defect."

EXPLANATORY:

42. *Thanatopsis.* A view of death; from two Greek words, θάνατος, death, and ὄψις; view.

42 : 2. *Communion with her visible forms.* The first sentence is distinctly Wordsworthian in thought and tone.

43 : 50. *Take the wings of morning.* "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psalms 139 : 9, 10).

43 : 51. *Barca's.* Barca is a desert region in northern Africa.

43 : 53. *Oregon.* Now known as the Columbia River in Oregon.

43 : 66. *make their bed with thee.* "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there" (Psalms 139 : 8).

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What general introductory thought is developed in the first sentence? (2) How is the specific theme of the poem led up to in the second sentence? What poetic imagery is used to bring the subject of death vividly before the mind? (3) What "still voice" (line 17) speaks to those who are burdened with the thought of death? The body of the poem, then, is made up of the speech of Nature to man on the subject of death, is it not? (4) Write out briefly the argument of the poem from this point, giving only the principal thoughts advanced. (Suggestion: "In a short time death will claim you, and your body will be placed in the earth to be resolved again into its elements. Yet you will not go alone, for you will find there the beautiful, the great, the good of all ages," etc.) (5) What is the exact meaning of "Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim Thy growth"? (6) What is the effect on the mind of the image beginning "To be a brother to the insensible rock"? (7) What is the advantage of selecting the oak as the specific image in the thought of line 30? (8) Why does the poet

represent the earth as a magnificent couch in line 33? Does he revert to this image again? Where? (9) What characters are suggested to your mind by the phrase "patriarchs of the infant world"? (10) Why is the epithet "rock-ribbed" a particularly happy one for the hills? (11) Read aloud the passage beginning "The hills" (line 37) and comment on the imagery of these eight lines. (12) Just what is suggested to your mind by the expression "Take the wings of morning" (line 50)? This is echoed from the Bible; does this fact increase its effectiveness here? (13) What are some of the "favorite phantoms" (line 64) that men pursue? (14) With what fine moral thought does Nature conclude her discourse? (15) Analyze the beautiful imagery in which this thought is expressed. Do you see vividly the "innumerable caravan" winding toward "the silent halls of death"? What do you think of the contrast drawn in the last lines? What would be the exact interpretation of "dungeon" and "couch" in this passage? (16) Some have called this a pagan rather than a Christian poem, meaning thereby that there is nothing in it which a pagan philosopher might not have said. Do you think the omission of the Christian teachings of immortality and resurrection of the body is a serious lack in the poem? Is there anything in the poem which denies these doctrines? Is it necessary for a poet to mix his theology with his art? (17) In what meter is this poem written? Scan the first five lines. (18) Notice how many of the lines are run-on lines; that is, the sense runs on without a pause from line to line. There is not even a comma at the end of a single line of the first ten. What is the stylistic effect of this? Are the long-cadenced sentences well suited to the thought of the poem? (19) How would you characterize the tone quality, movement, and general manner of the style? (Suggestion: Melancholy, sonorous, deep-voiced; slow, stately, dignified; majestic, reposeful, restrained.) (20) Memorize the first eight and the last nine lines; and also lines 37 to 45. (21) Suggested composition subjects: How "Thanatopsis" Affects Me; Bryant's Treatment of Nature; Bryant's Indebtedness to Wordsworth; Comparison of "Thanatopsis" with Gray's "Elegy."

To a Waterfowl (Bryant)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem, first published in the *North American Review*, March, 1818, had its origin in a personal experience. On December 15, 1815, Bryant, who was then twenty-one years old and had just been admitted to the bar, went to the little village of Plainfield a few miles from his father's home at Cummington in western Massachusetts, to see if he could find any encouragement for opening a law office there. Parke Godwin, his biographer, thus describes the incident as related by Bryant himself. "He felt, as he walked up the hills, very forlorn and desolate indeed, not knowing what was to become of him in the big world, which grew bigger as he ascended, and yet darker with the coming on of night. The sun had already set, leaving behind it one of those brilliant seas of chrysolite and opal which often flood the New England skies; and while he was looking upon the rosy splendor with rapt admiration, a solitary bird made wing along the illuminated horizon. He watched the lone wanderer until it was lost in the distance, asking himself whither it had come and to what far home it was flying. When he went to the house where he was to stop for the night, his mind was still full of what he had seen and felt, and he wrote those lines, as imperishable as our language, 'To a Waterfowl.'" Matthew Arnold relates an incident of how Hartley Coleridge read "To a Waterfowl" to him, calling it "the best short poem in the language." Arnold admitted that he was not sure but that Coleridge was right in this judgment.

EXPLANATORY:

44 : 7. *limned upon.* Bryant first wrote "painted on" but changed it to "limned upon," and in a still later edition to "seen against" because he said the image of the bird floating, in the next line, was incongruous with the image of a painted picture, which is stationary. Another suggested reading was "shadowed on." Which of them all do you think is the best? (Many modern editions retain the reading "painted on.")

44 : 9. *plashy.* Marshy, watery.

44 : 10. *marge.* A poetical form of *margin.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why is the generic *waterfowl* used in the title rather than a specific term like *wild duck?* (2) What figure of speech pervades the entire poem? (Determine to whom the poet is speaking.) In what mood and tone is the lyric written? Is there any jarring note in the whole composition? (3) Explain the figure of speech in the second line. (4) Why does the poet say "*vainly* the fowler's eye might mark thy distant flight"? Was the bird high or low in the air? (5) What do we call the power by which a bird knows exactly where to go? Is instinct in animals an evidence of a creative design in the universe? (6) Why are lines 15 and 16 most imaginative ones? (7) Explain why the poet calls the atmosphere cold and thin. (8) What transferred epithet do you note in line 19? (9) Is the poem just right in length? Could you read the six stanzas preceding "Thou'rt gone" while the waterfowl was still in sight? (10) Some critics have said that the addition of the moral (last stanza) is inartistic and almost spoils the poem. Do you agree with this? Give your reasons. (11) Study the form of the stanza. It is composed of four lines in iambic rhythm, the first and fourth being trimeter and the second and third pentameter, the rime being alternate. It is a rare form, though not unknown in English lyric poetry, and was used by Bryant in several poems. Note also that each stanza is one complete sentence. Do these long, involved sentences add anything to the general effect of the style? (12) Memorize the poem.

The Death of the Flowers (Bryant)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem, which appeared in the second edition of Bryant's poems, 1832, was written in 1825. It commemorates the death of his sister, Sarah Snell Bryant, who died of consumption in the autumn of 1824 at the age of twenty-two. Though she was eight years younger than he, the poet was deeply attached to her, and always enjoyed her companionship. George W. Cable in writing of this poem speaks of "those exquisite notes of grief . . . which only draw the tear to fill it with the light of a perfect resignation."

EXPLANATORY:

46 : 13. *wind-flower.* The anemone; called wind-flower because of its supposed affinity for the wind in its early spring blossoming time.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND LITERARY EXERCISES:

(1) Outline the poem by stanzas. [Suggestion: (*a*) Picture of late autumn; (*b*) the flowers are all gone; (*c*) detailed catalogue of the flowers by seasons; (*d*) the south wind searches for but finds not the flowers; (*e*) the death of the flowers brings thoughts of the death of his beautiful young sister who died in the autumn.] (2) Point out some of the best minute references to nature. (3) In what tone and mood is the poem written? (4) Do the long seven-stressed iambic lines add anything to the effect? Note that the pause regularly occurs after the fourth foot in each line, so that the effect is almost the same as a four-stressed followed by a three-stressed line. (5) Do you find a note of resignation in the poet's grief?

Robert of Lincoln (Bryant)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem appeared for the first time in the 1854 edition of Bryant's poems. It is entirely different from the body of his poetry, being brighter in tone, more distinctly musical, and lighted up with a touch of humor.

EXPLANATORY:

48 : 57. *Off is his holiday garment laid.* In the summer after the nesting time, the black and white plumage of the male bird becomes a dark buff or brown like that of the female.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the lyric impulse of this song? Do you think Bryant was listening to the bird's song as he wrote? (2) Outline the progress of the thought. Do you note any analogy between the domestic life of the birds and that of men? (3) Why is the female called a Quaker wife? (4) Does the poet accurately describe the appearance, song, and habits of these birds? (See any good encyclopedia or bird book for a description.) (5) Point out some slight touches of humor here and there in the poem. (6) What is the effect of the onomatopoetic refrain? Do you think the words are a good imitation of the bird's song? (7) What is the tone of the poem? (8) The meter is dactylic tetrameter, a rare form for lyric verse, but Bryant handles it very deftly. There are many substitutions of two-syllabled feet, both spondaic and trochaic, but the three-syllabled feet occur often enough to give the dactylic swing to the poem. The last foot in each line is catalectic, that is, the two light syllables are omitted. Scan the first stanza.

Oh Fairest of the Rural Maids (Bryant)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is the only surviving one of several love poems addressed by Bryant to Miss Frances Fairchild, the young lady who became his wife. It was written about 1820, but not published until the volume of Bryant's poems appeared in 1832. Poe called it the truest poem written by Bryant; we can well understand why Poe admired the simple, plaintive, delicate tone of this little song. It is plainly modeled on the lovely lyrics addressed by Wordsworth to Lucy, an imaginary rural girl for whom Wordsworth apparently assumed a romantic or imaginary passion. In particular "Oh Fairest of the Rural Maids" may be profitably compared with Wordsworth's poem called "Three Years She Grew," as may be indicated in the following stanzas from the last-named poem:

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn,
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mold the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What does the poet assume to be the birthplace of the girl baby? (2) How does he indicate the color of the child's eyes? (3) To what does he ascribe the child's beauty of heart and face? (4) What color of the young girl's hair is indicated by the natural images suggested in stanza three? (5) To what does the poet ascribe the girl's grace of motion? (6) To what are her eyes compared? Read Sidney Lanier's poem called "My Springs," written in honor of his wife's eyes. (7) Do you see any indications of the growth or progress of the child from birth to young-ladyhood? (8) Make a comparison of the poem with the stanzas from Wordsworth's poem quoted above.

Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

This beautiful ode was first published in the *Saturday Press*, December 24, 1859, under the title "A Child's Reminiscences." The next year it was included in the third edition of *Leaves of Grass*

(1860–1861) under the general title "A Word Out of the Sea" (later called "Sea Drift"), and the subtitle "Reminiscence" inserted just after line 23.

EXPLANATORY:

50 : 1. *the cradle endlessly rocking.* What is this? (See the title under which the poem appeared in the 1860 edition, introductory note above.)

50 : 3. *Ninth-month.* September. This is the Quaker method of naming the months. See *Fifth-month* in line 24.

50 : 9. *sad brother.* This refers to the bird. See note on line 61.

50 : 12. *thousand responses.* Compare line 177.

50 : 14. *the word stronger and more delicious than any.* See line 168 for this word.

50 : 15. *the scene revisiting.* That is, as I revisit the scene.

50 : 23. *Paumanok.* The Indian name for Long Island and Whitman's favorite poetical designation of it.

51 : 26. *Two feather'd guests.* Two mocking-birds. See line 2.

52 : 61. *my brother.* Whitman, like Burns, looked upon animals as his fellow-mortals and brothers. See line 9 above and lines 70, 175 below, and also line 102 of "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd."

52 : 66. *white arms.* That is, the jets of white spray, which remind the poet of a swimmer's white arms.

54 : 133. *fierce old mother.* The ocean. So also "savage old mother," line 141.

55 : 140. *the trio.* The bird, the sea, and the boy's soul.

55 : 143. *outsetting bard.* At a certain time in Whitman's life he had what has been called his "conversion," when he became conscious of his genius and set himself the task of striking up a new world-song of democracy. He dates the first dawnings of his poetical aspirations from the influences of nature felt in his boyhood when the full meaning of the sad notes of the bird entered his soul.

55 : 144. *Demon.* Used here in the old sense of a spirit with supernatural intelligence, and not necessarily, as later, a wicked spirit.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) The opening stanza is one long introductory sentence, preparing us for the reminiscence of an incident in the man's boyhood experiences. See lines 18 to 22 for the main predication. The full import of the material in this introduction cannot be appreciated until the end of the poem is reached. The boyhood reminiscence begins at line 23, and extends to the close, but the recital is interspersed with the later experiences and thoughts of the man. Relate the incident in its simple outline. (2) What do you think of the metaphors in lines 1 and 2? If you have ever seen the ocean rocking or heard the mocking-bird singing, you can all the better understand the figures. (3) At what time of year does the man go back to the scene of his boyhood experience (see line 3)? Connect this with the time of year of the boy's experience (line 24). (4) What is the function of the bird's love song, lines 32–40? (Suggestion: Compare this song with the bird's later songs and the answer will be evident.) (5) Why is the bird's call (line 52–54) made so short? Do you know the mocking-bird's call to its mate as distinguished from its imitative

song? Look up a good bird book or encyclopedia on this point. (6) Study carefully the bird's grief song. Notice how it opens with "Soothe! soothe! soothe!" as an onomatopoetic bird note, as well as a suggestion of the regular flow of the waves. Point out the different natural objects in which the bird looks for his mate. Notice, too, how the grief rises and falls and grows more intense toward the close when all hope of recovering his mate seems gone. How does the last line (129) echo the burden of the love song (lines 35 and 40), and what is the effect of this? (7) What was the effect of the song on the boy's heart? (See note on line 143.) (8) Explain what is meant by the trio. (See note on line 140.) (9) Do you think *fierce*, or *savage, old mother* is a good synonym for the sea? Why? (10) What is the "drown'd secret" (line 142) which the ocean hisses? Why is it not revealed just yet? Is *hissing* (142 and 170) a good word to use in this connection? (11) How does the poet gradually lead up to the disclosure of the one word, the power which sublimates and equalizes all things (see lines 158 to 168)? Whitman is undoubtedly the poet who has best sung the mysterious beauty of death. Death is the central and culminating point in his whole philosophy and the gate to a sure immortality. (12) Read the introductory and concluding stanzas together and point out all similarities and echo phrases, and comment on the artistic effect of this device. (13) Study the peculiar rhythmic chant or monotone of the body of the poem, and note the variety of phrasal grouping in the lines. Note also how the songs are given a distinct lyrical impulse and tone without the ordinary conventions of rime, regular stanza, and ordered meter and rhythm. (14) Memorize the first bird song (lines 32–40).

When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

This threnody and the following grief lyric, "O Captain! My Captain!" are the first two of four poems called "Memorials of President Lincoln" in the final edition of *Leaves of Grass*. They were written in 1865 shortly after Lincoln's death by assassination, April 14–15, 1865, included in a supplemental volume called *Sequel to Drum-Taps* (1865), and afterward bound up with some of the remaining unbound copies of *Drum-Taps*, which was just going through the press when the tragedy occurred. Whitman was at his home in Brooklyn with his mother when the news reached him. He thus records the experience of April 15, 1865: "Mother prepared breakfast — and other meals afterwards—as usual; but not a mouthful was eaten all day by either of us. We each drank half a cup of coffee; that was all. Little was said. We got every newspaper morning and evening, and the frequent extras of that period, and pass'd them silently to each other." In *Specimen Days*, p. 68, under date of April 16, 1865, is given Whitman's estimate of Lincoln: "He leaves for America's history and biography, so far, not only its most dramatic reminiscence — he leaves, in my opinion, the greatest, best, most characteristic, artistic, moral personality. Not but that he had faults, and show'd them in the presidency; but honesty, goodness, shrewdness, conscience, and (a new virtue, unknown to other lands, and hardly yet really known here, but the foundation tie of all, as the future will grandly develop) *Unionism*, in its truest and amplest sense, form'd the hard-pan of his character. These he seal'd with his life. The tragic splendor of his death, purging, illuminating all, throws round his form, his head, an aureole that will remain and will grow brighter through time, while history lives and love of country lasts."

The lilacs were in bloom in Brooklyn, and the scent of this favorite flower was naturally associated in the poet's mind with the death of the great President. Whitman had never been personally introduced to President Lincoln, but while he was working in the hospitals at Washington he had frequently seen the President going on his rides, and had recorded in his notes his impressions of the man. Lincoln, too, knew Whitman at sight and now and then exchanged cordial bows with him. On the occasion of Whitman's being pointed out to him, Lincoln remarked with peculiar emphasis on his words, "Well, *he* looks like a *man*."

These two poems of Whitman's are undoubtedly the finest poetical tribute paid to the martyred President. "O Captain! My Captain!" is better known, perhaps, because it is briefer and because it is written in the regular technical form of lyric verse. But the threnody, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," written in Whitman's characteristic recitative, or free verse, with the fine lyric interlude of the song of the hermit thrush, is the greater poem and certainly reaches the high-water mark of Whitman's genius. Swinburne in a characteristic outburst of early enthusiasm said that it was "the most sonorous anthem ever chanted in the church of the world."

EXPLANATORY:

57 : 1. *lilacs.* The lilac was a favorite flower with Whitman. At the old family homestead on Long Island there grew great clusters of these beautiful and fragrant blossoms. At Brooklyn, where Whitman was when he heard of the death of Lincoln, there were many yards with lilac borders, but in imagination the poet has associated the scene of his dirge with its threefold symbol, the lilac, the star, and the bird, around the old homestead at West Hills.

57 : 2. *great star.* Venus, the brightest of the planets, is seen low in the west in the spring. Whitman seems to identify the star with Lincoln, the sinking of the star into darkness representing Lincoln's death.

57 : 9. *murk.* An archaic word meaning darkness. What does it typify if Lincoln is the sinking star? (See the preceding note.)

57 : 20–21. *the thrush, The hermit.* The North American hermit thrush, a shy and retiring bird with olive-brownish plumage, is a beautiful singer.

58 : 32. *Night and day journeys a coffin.* Lincoln's body was carried to Springfield, Illinois, for burial. On its journey of two thousand miles, throngs of people assembled all along the way to do honor to the dead president.

59 : 55. *western orb.* The evening star.

59 : 56. *a month since I walk'd.* This probably refers to a real incident recorded in *Specimen Days* (p. 43): "I see the President almost every day, as I happen to live where he passes to or from his lodgings out of town. He never sleeps at the White House during the hot season, but has quarters at a healthy location some three miles north, the Soldiers' Home, a United States military establishment. . . . I see very plainly Abraham Lincoln's dark brown face, with the deep-cut lines, the eyes, always to me, with a deep latent sadness in the expression. . . . They pass'd me once very close, and I saw the President in the face fully, as they were moving slowly, and his look, though abstracted, happen'd to be directed steadily in my eye. He bow'd and smiled, but far beneath his smile I noticed well the expression I have alluded to. None of the artists or pictures has caught the deep, though subtle and indirect, expression of this man's face. There is something else there. One of the great portrait painters of two or three centuries ago is needed."

60 : 67. *singer bashful and tender.* The poet here reverts to the thrush to keep the reader from forgetting the bird which is later to sing the "Death Carol."

60 : 78. *what shall I hang on the chamber walls?* It was customary in ancient times to hang votive emblems on the walls of the temples in honor of victory, dead heroes, etc. Whitman has here adapted this custom to his purposes in introducing the decorations for Lincoln's tomb.

60 : 82. *Fourth-month.* April. See "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking" (lines 3 and 24).

61 : 90. *Manhattan.* New York City, the heart of which is located on Manhattan Island. Whitman called this his city, and practically always used some form of the old Indian name to designate it.

63 : 134. *tallied the song of the bird. Tally* means to score with corresponding notches on two sticks; hence the meaning here is that the poet's soul echoed the song of the bird word for word. Whitman was very fond of this expression. See lines 163, 187, 200 below.

65 : 204. *the sweetest, wisest soul.* See introductory note, quotations from *Specimen Days* (p. 68).

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Try to put yourself in the proper mood for reading this great poem on death. Recall all you know and think and feel regarding Abraham Lincoln, and try to imagine how his tragic death affected the nation, and especially Walt Whitman, the poet whose love for democratic America was all-encompassing. Recall the form, color, and odor of lilacs, and associate this flower with Lincoln's death as Whitman did. Then imagine the poet sitting on the veranda of his ancestral farm home, beside the door of which the lilacs were blooming, looking out over the west just as night came on and the beautiful evening star was slowly sinking behind the horizon and the solitary hermit thrush was soulfully singing in the dark swamp. These three objects become the motifs or lyrical symbols of the hymn. Now begin to read in a slow, solemn tone, thinking soberly and deeply as you read, following the poet in his imaginative flights and re-creating his mood from stanza to stanza as nearly as you can. (2) After you have read the poem straight through in this way, go back and study its structure. Notice the ode form in which this threnody, or dirge, is written. The stanzas vary in length as the intensity of the emotion increases or subsides. Note how skillfully the three concrete symbols are woven together for a unified final effect. Point out some of the most intense passages, and indicate some of the places where the poet consciously injects one or the other of the three symbols just to keep them all before the reader's mind. Now, take up the poem in detail. The following questions will aid you in this study. (3) What two

concrete images are associated with the poet's grief in the first stanza? (4) Why is the second stanza written in such broken, exclamatory style? (5) How does the tone change in the third stanza? (6) To what single object is the third stanza devoted, and why? (7) What third motif, or symbol, is introduced in the fourth stanza? Why is the song spoken of as from a "bleeding throat"? Why is it called "Death's outlet song of life"? (8) What procession does the poet have in mind in the fifth stanza? Is the railroad journey clearly presented to your mind? What elements of beauty enter the description? (9) What picture is presented in the sixth stanza? How are the third and sixth stanzas united? (10) In the seventh stanza, which is parenthetical, how does the poet broaden the theme so as to make a universal application of the specific instance? (11) To what symbol does the poet revert in the eighth stanza? Do you think Lincoln himself might be the star that was so full of sorrow (see note on line 56)? (12) Why does the poet stop to mention the bird again in stanza 9? Where does he next introduce the bird, and for what purpose? At what point in the progress of the poem is the bird's carol introduced? Has this climax been carefully prepared for? (13) What beautiful new thought is given in the tenth stanza? (14) Give the decorative pictures as presented in stanza 11. (15) In stanza 12 the poet offers the whole of America, body and soul, city and country, as a decorative tribute for the dead President's tomb. How does he manage to encompass in brief space the whole land with all its sections? (16) What is the function of stanza 13? (Note how all three symbols are united here.) (17) How does stanza 14 summarize and enrich the picture, and at the same time present a new and startling imaginative vision? What is the distinction you would make between the companions that hold the poet by either hand? (18) What do you think of the bird's carol on death? Why is it called a carol instead of a lament? Did you ever think of death as an object of praise and glorification and joyous thanksgiving? Is it the bird or Whitman's soul that really sings this carol? How does the poet indicate that his soul responds to every word that the bird sings? (19) What visions did the song of the bird bring to the poet (stanza 15), and what new thought came to him about the dead? (20) How does he dismiss and yet retain in his mind all the symbols and companions his grief-stricken imagination has conjured up? Quote from memory the last four lines of the poem. (21) Do you notice how the song of the bird and the scenes of nature have softened and quieted the poet's grief? Quote a passage from Bryant in this connection. (22) What peculiarities of style do you find in this poem? Is the punctuation always conventional? Are the sentences always complete; that is, do they always have the predicate and subject fully stated? Are Whitman's rhythmic chants like anything else you have read in this book? (23) Suggestions for compositions: Whitman's Portrayal of Nature; Whitman, the Poet of Democracy; Why I Think Whitman is (or is not) the Greatest American Poet; Walt Whitman and Abraham Lincoln.

O Captain! My Captain! (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

See the introductory note to "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," p. 505.

EXPLANATORY:

66 : 2. *rack.* Storm, shipwreck; cognate with *wrack*, an obsolete form of *wreck.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Under what figure does Whitman conceive the Union and at what critical moment in our history? Who is the Captain? (2) What is the meaning of "the prize we sought is won"? Do you catch the full vision of the grand old ship coming into the harbor of peace after the great Civil War? (3) Give the circumstances of Lincoln's death. Does the image of the Captain fallen on the deck in his own blood fit the facts? (4) Why does Whitman call Lincoln "dear father" (lines 3 and 8)? (5) What is the meaning of the bells, flags, etc., as indicated in stanza 2? In what respect does the tone of this stanza differ from the tone of the next stanza? (6) How are the two notes of rejoicing and sorrow mingled in the final stanza? (7) Study the form of this lyric, noting that it has regular iambic rhythm, rime, and refrain, and is similar to conventional lyrics and entirely different from most of Whitman's poetry. Point out one example of rime within the line and one faulty end rime. (8) Compare this poem with the closing lines of Longfellow's "The Building of the Ship," beginning "Thou too sail on, O Ship of State."

The Mystic Trumpeter (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

This noble chant was first published in 1872 with the poem "As a Strong Bird on Pinions Free," which had been recited by the poet at the Commencement celebration of Dartmouth College that year.

EXPLANATORY:

67. *The Mystic Trumpeter.* This shadowy musician is symbolic of the poet's ideal or creative imagination; and by identifying himself with the trumpeter, Whitman partially expresses his own poetic creed and what he hoped to effect by his poetry.

67 : 24. *troubadours.* The medieval poets of certain parts of France, Spain, and Italy who sang principally of love and war.

68 : 25. *holy Graal.* The Holy Grail. See the note on Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal," p. 572.

68 : 36. *alembic.* A glass distilling vessel. Expound the figurative use here.

70 : 71. *bacchanals.* Devotees of Bacchus, the god of wine.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Show how the poet first hears, then invokes, the mystic trumpeter (stanzas 1 and 2). (2) Just what is typified in this mysterious musician? (3) What is the first effect of the trumpet's free, clear note on the poet (stanza 3)? (4) What theme is developed in the fourth stanza? Does this stanza summarize for you all that you have ever read of the feudal ages? (5) Why does the chant become more intense and more emotional in the fifth stanza? (6) What is the subject of the sixth stanza? (7) What thoughts seem to oppress the poet's spirit in the seventh stanza? Is it true that at times the whole world

seems going wrong? (8) What striking contrast to stanza 7 is developed in stanza 8? Does this seem to indicate Whitman's fundamental optimism? In this final stanza Whitman sketches the ideal toward which he believed democratic America was tending. (9) Does this poem read more easily and naturally than the preceding long poems by Whitman? What is the chief difference in style between this and the other poems you have read? (10) Compare this poem with Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," and determine which of the two you think is the finer poetical production.

For You, O Democracy (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

This song, which first appeared in the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, is one of the most perfectly lyrical of the thirty-nine poems collected under the title of "Calamus" in the final edition of Whitman's works. All of these songs, besides many others throughout *Leaves of Grass*, celebrate the general theme of love of comrades. In fact, comradeship is one of the outstanding themes treated by Whitman. He believed that the final triumph of democracy would come through universal fraternity among men, or as he preferred to express it, the love of comrades. He was himself a most satisfying comrade, attracting to himself by his personal magnetism and wide sympathy practically all types of men.

EXPLANATORY:

70 : 10. *ma femme.* French, my wife. Somewhat as Christ looked upon the early church as his bride, so Whitman looked upon democracy as his bride.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does the poet propose to bind the whole continent together in an indissoluble union? (2) By what figure does he indicate the dissemination or spread of the idea of comradeship throughout the nation? (3) How are neighboring cities to regard each other under this new impulse? What figure of speech is used here to emphasize the thought? (4) For what does the poet claim to be trilling all his songs? Do you agree with him that the love of comrades will strengthen and make sure the triumph of democracy? (5) What is the effect of the repeated phrases in the first and the second strains? (6) How does the song affect you? Do you catch anything of the poet's enthusiastic and sincere love for the democratic ideal? (7) Can you read this kind of verse easily? Do you like free verse better as you read more of it?

The Prairie-Grass Dividing (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is another of the "Calamus" poems on comradeship. Calamus is a tall, succulent water grass found abundantly along the Mississippi valley and especially in the low lands of Louisiana. Whitman no doubt first became familiar with this beautiful grass in the vast stretches of it in the swampy lands along the Mississippi when he went to New Orleans in 1848 and returned leisurely up through the Middle West and by the Great Lakes back to New York the next year. He seized upon the calamus as a symbol of comradeship, using the closely enfolded leaves and the sweet-smelling roots as emblematic of affectionate and lasting friendship between human beings. In connection with this particular song, which celebrates the open, sincere, and natural type of Western comradeship, we may quote a paragraph from an essay on "The Prairies" found in *Specimen Days*, Whitman's best prose work. "I wonder indeed if the people of this continental inland West know how much of first-class *art* they have in these prairies—how original and all your own—how much of the influences of a character for your future humanity, broad, patriotic, heroic, and new? how entirely they tally on land the grandeur and superb monotony of the skies of heaven, and the ocean with its waters? how freeing, soothing, nourishing they are to the soul? . . . This favor'd central area of (in round numbers) two thousand miles square seems fated to be the home both of what I would call America's distinctive ideas and distinctive realities."

EXPLANATORY:

71 : 1. *The prairie-grass dividing.* That is, walking through the tall, beautiful calamus or cane grass of the Mississippi valley.

71 : 2. *the spiritual corresponding.* That is, the spiritual lesson or moral interpretation corresponding to the sweet odor of the grass and the freshness and closeness of the enfolding blades. In the next two lines the poet says that he interprets the calamus as the symbol of the close and loving comradeship of men, the blades being typical of words, acts, and beings or bodies of the strong Western type of manhood. The remainder of the poem is given over to the description of this type of manhood.

71 : 9. *never obedient.* The poet means here not that these men never obey, but that they command rather than obey.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What picture is suggested by the opening line? (2) What is the exact sense of the second line? (3) What general characteristics does the poet set down for the Western type of manhood? (4) Do you think he has correctly interpreted the influence of the open prairies upon the character of the people who live in the great Middle West? (5) In the last six lines what device is used to mark off the rhythmic phrases? Should line seven be divided into two rhythmic phrases, or is it better to read it as a single line? How is the last line of all made emphatic?

Full of Life, Now (Whitman)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is the last of the "Calamus" songs, all dealing with comradeship. The theme here is the comradeship of future generations of readers with the poet. Whitman called the "Calamus" poems "the frailest leaves of me and yet my strongest lasting."

EXPLANATORY:

71 : 4. *these.* That is, these poems, or "leaves of grass."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What two points of view are set forth in the two strains? (2) What words and phrases in the first strain are repeated in the second, and what is the effect of this device? (3) What is the exact date of the composition of this poem (see line 2)? (4) In what sense are you now realizing Whitman's poems and seeking him (line 6)? In what sense, then, is he now with you? (5) At what point is the idea of comradeship brought in? Do you think you might have enjoyed Whitman's comradeship if you had known him in real life? Be not too certain that you do not know him in real life, as he says in the final line of the poem.

Heroism (Emerson)

INTRODUCTORY:

Emerson delivered a lecture on heroism in Boston during the winter of 1837–1838. This essay is probably a revision of that lecture. It occurs in the *Essays*, First Series, published in 1841. Only the quotation from Mahomet appeared as a motto heading in the first edition, but in later editions the additional lines composed by Emerson to fit the thought of the essay were inserted. Read these mottoes carefully; notice how admirably they suggest and summarize the thought of the essay.

EXPLANATORY:

72 : 15. *Rodrigo, Pedro or Valerio.* Names of characters in several plays by Beaumont and Fletcher, English dramatists of the time of Shakespeare.

72 : 21. *Bonduca, Sophocles,* etc. Names of plays by Beaumont and Fletcher. "Sophocles" is really not a play but the name of a prominent character in the *Triumph of Honor*, one of four short plays or "triumphs" included under the title *Four Plays in One*. The long quotation just below is taken from Scene i of the *Triumph of Honor.*

73 : 34. *Ariadne's crown.* A constellation. Look up the whole beautiful story of Ariadne in classic mythology and report on it.

73 : 58. *Strike, strike, Valerius.* That is, lower your weapon, stop the punishment of Sophocles and Dorigen.

73 : 82. *flutes . . . fife.* The flute is typical of soft, voluptuous music; the fife of vigorous, martial, heroic strains.

74 : 86. *Lord Evandale.* In chapter 42 of Scott's *Old Mortality* Burley's characterization of Lord Evandale may be found.

74 : 91. *a song or two.* Such perhaps as "Scots Wha Ha' wi' Wallace Bled" and "A Man's a Man for a' That."

74 : 91. *Harleian Miscellanies.* Robert Harley, first Earl of Oxford (1661–1724), collected many rare books and pamphlets. These are now to be found in the library at Oxford University. In Vol. IV, p. 197, of the published series (1808) there is a spirited account of the battle of Lützen (1632) between Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, and Wallenstein, the great general fighting under Ferdinand II, King of Bohemia. Gustavus Adolphus won a great victory but lost his life.

74 : 93. *Simon Ockley.* English Arabic scholar and historian; died 1720.

74 : 98. *Plutarch.* A Greek historian of the first century who wrote the lives of many ancient heroes, statesmen, and philosophers. Some of them are named in the text. Read several of these heroic biographies, and see if you do not become interested enough to read more of the "Lives."

74 : 117. *insanity that makes him eat grass.* See the story of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:33.

75 : 141. *hero is a mind.* That is, he possesses a mind, etc.

75 : 150. *Heroism feels and never reasons.* Emerson believed more in intuitive insight into truth than in the products of the logical or reasoning faculties.

76 : 182. *Plotinus.* A Greco-Egyptian philosopher of the third century who exalted the ideal or spiritual to the neglect of the physical or materialistic.

76 : 184. *cats'-cradles.* A child's game made by looping a string over the fingers so as to form imitative figures. Compare Job's coffin, crow's feet, etc.

76 : 189. *the great hoax.* That is, the world, life. Compare this passage with Shakespeare's "seven ages of man," *As You Like It,* II:vii.

77 : 195. "*Indeed . . .* " The quotation is from *Henry IV*, Part II, II:ii. See also Hotspur's famous speech in *Henry IV*, Part I, I: iii, in which he flays "a certain lord," a "popinjay," who came to demand prisoners of him.

77 : 207. *Ibn Haukal.* An Arabian geographer; died 976. Emerson must have read the account in Sir William Ouseley's translation, *The Oriental Geography of Ibn Haukal* (1800). This illustrates Emerson's habit of using unusual and obscure allusions.

77 : 220. *put God under obligation.* The same idea is expressed in the essay on "Compensation," p. 100, "Put God in your debt."

78 : 229. *bannocks.* Coarse barley or oatmeal griddle cakes used by the peasants in northern England and Scotland.

78 : 238. *John Eliot* (1604–1690). The Apostle to the Indians. He lived among the Indians, teaching and preaching to them. He translated the Bible into the Indian language.

78 : 242. *King David.* Repeat the story as told in I Chronicles 11 : 15–19.

78 : 245. *Brutus.* Marcus Junius Brutus (85–42 B.C.), the friend and one of the assassins of Julius Caesar. Efforts to locate the source of Emerson's information concerning the story that Brutus thus quotes this line have been unsuccessful. Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar*, following Plutarch's "Life," makes Brutus say,

> "My heart doth joy that yet in all my life
> I found no man but he was true to me.
> I shall have glory by this losing day
> More than Octavius and Mark Antony
> By this vile conquest shall attain unto."—V: v.

78 : 260. *Scipio.* The Roman general who destroyed Carthage, 146 B.C.

79 : 264. *Socrates.* A celebrated Greek philosospher; died 390 B.C. The Prytaneum was a palace where distinguished guests were entertained

by the state free of charge. Socrates playfully declared that he ought to be entertained there for life.

79 : 265. *Sir Thomas More.* An English nobleman who was beheaded as a traitor in 1535 in the reign of Henry VIII. It is said that when he mounted the scaffold he asked a friend to help him up, and then remarked, "When I come down, I can shift for myself." He is the author of the famous Latin romance *Utopia.*

79 : 269. The quotation is from *The Sea Voyage,* IV: iii.

79 : 280. *Blue-Laws.* In the early colonial governments, particularly in New Haven, Connecticut, the so-called "blue laws" were very strict and puritanical in character. Hence any harsh, restraining law is called a blue law.

80 : 309. *That country is the fairest which is inhabited by the noblest minds.* Compare with Ruskin's saying, "That country is richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings."

80 : 312. *Pericles,* etc. Pericles (died 429 B.C.), Greek statesman; Xenophon (died 357), Greek historian; Columbus (died 1506), Genoese explorer, discovered America, 1492; Bayard, Chevalier de (died 1524), French hero, the knight *sans peur et sans reproche,* "without fear and without reproach"; Sidney, Sir Philip (died 1586), an English nobleman, soldier, and author; or perhaps Emerson had in mind Algernon Charles Sidney (died 1683), an English patriot executed for alleged complicity in the Rye House Plot. Hampden, John (died 1643), English statesman, opposed ship tax of Charles I. All these men suffered reverses and exhibited notable traits of heroism and unselfishness in their troubles.

80 : 333. *Sappho, or Sévigné, or De Staël.* Three notable women, the first a lyric poet of ancient Greece, the second and third noted French writers and clever conversationalists.

81 : 336. *Themis.* The wife of Zeus; she was the goddess of law and order and absolute right. Note the appropriateness of this appeal to a female deity.

81 : 339. *Let the maiden* . . . to end of paragraph. This passage is worth committing to memory.

81 : 365. "*Always do,*" etc. This advice is said to have been given to Emerson by his eccentric but strong-minded aunt, Miss Mary Moody Emerson. Do you think it is good advice? Why?

81 : 368. *Phocion.* A noted Athenian aristocrat, statesman, and soldier; died 317 B.C. He opposed the policy ot Demosthenes in regard to the war against Philip of Macedon, preferring instead to make peace.

82 : 384. *asceticism.* The doctrine of extreme self-denial, abstinence, austerity, and the like, in order to gain perfection of character.

82 : 404. *Lovejoy.* In 1837 the Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy, a Presbyterian minister, was killed by a mob in Alton, Illinois, for persistence in his right to publish freely his articles against negro slavery. Note how strongly Emerson voices his own feelings through this example. If possible, read the full account of Lovejoy's martyrdom in the Centenary Edition of Emerson's works, Vol. II, p. 424.

83 : 410. *stablish.* Establish. The old form occurs frequently in the King James Version of the Bible. Does Emerson gain anything by choosing this archaic form of the word?

83 : 426. "*Let them rave.*" Imperfectly quoted from one of Tennyson's early poems, "A Dirge."

83 : 438. *conversation.* Here used in the sense of intercourse, association, connection.

83 : 439. *sooner than treacherous.* That is, the love that will be annihilated sooner than it will prove to be treacherous, etc.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Test by your own reading the following outline by paragraphs: 1. The heroic in early English dramatic literature. 2. Modern literature has some touches of the heroic, but Plutarch is the great source book of heroism. 3. Need for such examples. 4. Education must forewarn and arm the youth so as to prepare him for life's warfare. 5. Definition of heroism; how it expresses itself in its rudest forms. 6. Heroism cuts across accepted ideas of prudence and conventional life and proves its right to do so. 7. Heroism trusts itself and despises the little, piddling, prudent care of the body. 8. Heroism does not count the cost of hospitality, but is magnanimous. 9. The hero is temperate and never demands luxuries for himself. 10. The heroic soul clings to virtue; yields not to personal ease and comfort. 11. Above all the hero is good-humored and sportive even amid the hardships and crises of life. 12. The perennial interest in heroes and heroic literature is due to the fact that, no matter what our circumstances may be, we are capable of becoming heroic and appropriating the hero's virtues in our own lives. 13. The aspiration of youth, even though it may never ripen, springs from the heroic instinct and is its own reward. 14. Heroism is consistently persistent even when the outcome seems contradictory. 15. The heroic soul never worries over apparent blunders or indiscretions. 16. The fortunate should subject themselves to some form of asceticism in order to develop heroic qualities. 17. All ages, even the most prosaic, offer opportunities to test heroism. 18. Trust yourself; prepare for the personal heroic crisis, for whatever has happened to men may happen again. 19. The hero can rest peacefully when he has done his best according to the light that is in him. (2) Does Emerson stick to his subject throughout the essay? Can you see any regular plan or orderliness in the development of the theme? If so, make some larger headings covering groups of paragraphs. [Suggestion: Introductory thoughts on heroism (paragraphs 1–4); definition and specific qualities of heroism (paragraphs 5–11); some evidences of the heroic spirit in everyday life (paragraphs 12–19).] (3) In paragraph 1, what is the function of sentences 1 and 2, which speak of gentility in the older English dramatists? What is the main topic of this paragraph? Do you think the long quotation justifies Emerson's high opinion of its heroic quality? What does Dorigen mean by "With this tie up my sight"? What does Martius mean by saying his heart will leap out of his mouth? (4) Have you read any of the modern literature referred to in paragraph 2? If so, how well do you think the examples are chosen? If not, read one or two of the specimens and make your decision as to their fitness in illustrating the point. (5) Look up the meaning of *stoicism* (paragraph 2), *cathartic* (paragraph 3), *urbanity* (paragraph 4). Write out the definitions of these and seven other words of your own selection in this essay, giving the special sense in which each is used in the text. (6) Explain the fitness of the examples of good humor and hilarity in paragraph 9. (7) Exactly what is meant by "Let us find room for this guest in our small houses," paragraph 12? (8) Work out carefully the thought of the beautiful

final sentence of the essay. Does Emerson believe in immortality? (9) Select and memorize one good passage from each of the following paragraphs: 12, 13, 14, 17, 19.

Compensation (Emerson)

INTRODUCTORY:

Whether this essay was first delivered as a lecture is now a matter of conjecture, but there is no doubt that Emerson was early impressed with the universal application of the law of compensation, and he probably introduced into his first lectures some of the ideas now incorporated in the essay. In June, 1831, he wrote in his *Journal* a considerable note on compensation, among other things saying, "Is not the law of Compensation perfect? It holds, as far as we can see, different gifts to different individuals, but with a mortgage of responsibility on every one. . . . I have nothing charactered on my brain that outlives this word Compensation." The essay was published in *Essays*, First Series, 1841, and it has since held the foremost or very nearly the foremost place in popularity among all Emerson's essays.

EXPLANATORY:

84 : 8. *Electric star and pencil.* Probably refers to comets and shooting stars.

84 : 11. *makeweight.* An insignificant weight or bit of matter used to make up a true balance.

84 : 18. *None from its stock that vine can reave.* That is, the vine cannot take away anything from the tree on which it grows.

84 : 20. *There's no god. . . .* What is the meaning of this line? Note the striking paradox.

86 : 101. *the following chapter.* The next essay — namely, on "Spiritual Laws."

86 : 105. *Polarity.* The quality of possessing opposite poles or contrasted characteristics. This is the keyword to the body of the essay. Notice the emphatic position in which it is placed in the paragraph.

86 : 110. *systole and diastole.* Systole is the contraction of the heart which drives the blood outward; diastole is the expansion which draws the blood inward.

88 : 163. *intenerate.* Make tender or soft; from Latin *tener*, tender.

88 : 177. *bear witness to the light.* A reminiscence of John 1:7. Similarly "hate father and mother," in the next sentence, is an adaptation of Luke 14:26.

89 : 186. *Res nolunt*, etc. Translated in the preceding sentence of the text.

89 : 218. *The world globes itself in a drop of dew.* In what sense?

90 : 229. *Thus is the universe alive.* Emerson believed in a universal soul, a world soul, and an individual soul of man, all as parts of one great soul system. Read the essay on "The Oversoul."

90 : 232. "*It is in the world,*" etc. A reminiscence of John 1:10.

90 : 235. *The dice of God*, etc. A translation of the preceding quotation from the Greek.

91 : 272. *soul says, 'Eat'; the body would feast.* See the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16–21), "Eat, drink, and be merry."

91 : 273. *one flesh.* "And Adam said: This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman . . . and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:23, 24).

91 : 275. *dominion over all things.* See Genesis 1:26.

91 : 278. *All things shall be added unto it.* "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

91 : 281. *truck and higgle.* To barter and contend over a bargain.

92 : 295. "*Drive out Nature,*" etc. An old Latin saying quoted by Horace in the first of his Epistles.

92 : 314. "*How secret,*" etc. From the Confessions of Saint Augustine.

92 : 324. *Prometheus.* Look up the story of Prometheus and the other classical allusions in this paragraph. Prometheus knew how Jupiter was to be overthrown.

92 : 328. "*Of all the gods,*" etc. Translated from a speech by Athena, or Minerva, in the *Eumenides* ("Furies"), a drama by Aeschylus. Emerson quotes from R. Potter's poetical translation, London, 1779, Vol. II, p. 288.

93 : 331. *A plain confession.* The verb is omitted. Supply it.

93 : 338. *Siegfried.* Hero of the German epic "Nibelungenlied."

93 : 348. *Nemesis.* The goddess of retribution. The other allusions in this paragraph may be verified in a classic mythology.

93 : 354. *belt which Ajax gave Hector,* etc. After a personal combat Ajax and Hector exchanged arms; later Ajax committed suicide with Hector's sword; and when Achilles killed Hector and dragged his body around Troy, he used the belt of Ajax to fasten Hector's body to his chariot. See the *Iliad* for fuller details.

93 : 358. *Theagenes.* This explains how a wall (line 352) may punish a wrong, just as the sword and belt had done in the instances mentioned above.

94 : 369. *Phidias.* The greatest of Greek sculptors; died 432 B.C.

95 : 424. *vulgar.* Common; from the Latin *vulgus,* the common people.

96 : 446. *obscene bird.* That is, the carrion crow Fear. *Obscene* is here used in the original Latin sense of ill-omened.

96 : 450. *emerald of Polycrates.* Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, was so fortunate that he was warned that he must suffer some loss or injury, or else he would incur the envy of the gods and receive severe punishment. He threw into the sea an emerald ring, one of his most cherished treasures, but in a little while it was found in the stomach of a fish and restored to him. The story goes that shortly afterward Polycrates was taken by his enemies and crucified.

96 : 452. *noble asceticism and vicarious virtue.* Noble asceticism means the noble desire to suppress or sacrifice one's self for the soul's good; vicarious virtue means the substitution of another's virtue for our own, as when we say Christ's virtue is a substitute for our sins.

96 : 456. *scot and lot.* In old English law, a tax levied according to one's ability to pay. The sense here is, to pay up fully all one's obligations or debts. Read in this connection what is said in the next paragraph, "Always pay," etc.

97 : 507. *his honest care.* What is the antecedent of *his?* The antecedent really follows rather than precedes in this case.

98 : 518. *leger.* An archaic form of *ledger.*

98 : 542. *Love, and you shall be loved.* In form this sentence echoes Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find," etc.

99 : 550. "*Winds blow,*" etc. Quoted from Wordsworth's sonnet beginning "Inland, within a hollow vale I stood."

99 : 554. *As no man had ever a point of pride*, etc. See the quotation from Burke in paragraph 28.

99 : 580. *cicatrizes.* Forms a scar.

100 : 602. *Put God in your debt.* The same thought occurs in the essay on "Heroism." Locate it.

100 : 610. *traversing its work.* That is, contradicting reason's work.

102 : 670. *His life.* That is, the upright or virtuous life.

103 : 705. *I am my brother.* A reminiscence of "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9).

103 : 715. *wit.* Used in the sense of knowledge, insight.

103 : 722. *as the shell-fish crawls out.* Compare the thought with that of Holmes's "Chambered Nautilus," p. 292.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

General. (1) What general idea does Emerson develop in the Introduction, paragraphs 1 to 6? (2) Do you agree with the preacher (paragraph 2) or with Emerson (paragraph 4) in regard to true success? (3) What is the main teaching of the body of the essay as indicated in paragraph 7? (4) Take the following suggestions and make a complete outline of the essay, condensing and restating where possible, and indicating the number of paragraphs in each division; then fill in the subdivisions by giving the paragraph topics: I. Reasons for the desirability of writing on the law of compensation. II. The law of polarity or dualism exists in all nature (*a*) as seen in the material world; (*b*) as seen in the moral and spiritual world; (*c*) as seen in the records of literature and art; (*d*) as applied to practical life; (*e*) as applied to labor; (*f*) as applied to virtue and vice; (*g*) as applied to the nature of the soul; (*h*) as seen in the calamities of life. (5) Is the evolution of the thought of the essay as indicated in the foregoing outline logical and effective? Are the relations between the parts perfectly evident, or do you have some trouble in coördinating the various thought units? (6) Do you think Emerson paid a great deal of attention to the sequence and arrangement of his paragraphs? Of his sentences or thought units within the paragraph? What effect has his habit on the reader's attention? (7) Does Emerson appeal to our logical faculties or largely to our emotional and imaginative faculties? Is he convincing? Inspiring? (8) What did you think of this essay as a whole when you first read it? What do you think of it after studying it more closely? (9) Compare the structure and style of this essay with the structure and style of the essay on "Heroism."

Specific. (1) What thought does the first headpiece or motto express? The second? Are the mottoes appropriate for this essay? (2) What is the relation between paragraphs 2 and 3? 2 and 4? 5 and 1? (3) What is the function of the short paragraph 6? What was Emerson's real purpose in writing the essay? (4) Point out examples of concrete rather than general terms in paragraphs 3, 9, 14. Note other examples throughout the essay. (5) Explain "If riches increase, they are increased that use them," and "Nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest," in paragraph 10. (6) Have you known or read of instances which illustrate the thought of the latter part of paragraph 10? What about Silas Marner? (7) "Eyes, ears . . . all find room to consist in the small creature," paragraph 14; is this literally true? (8) In what sense is the king of England helpless (paragraph 21)? (9) Are the figures and illustration in paragraph 27 effective? Why? (10) Explain why the proverb "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," paragraph 28, is sound philosophy. Read paragraph 29 in this connection. (11) Prove from your own experience the truth expressed in paragraph 29. (12) "Our property is timid," etc., paragraph 30. Why? (13) Explain the thought of paragraph 31. Look up the notes on this paragraph. (14) Illustrate from your own experience or observation the sayings in paragraph 32, "He had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbor's coach," and "The highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it." (15) Make a practical application to your school work of the thought in the last sentence of paragraph 34. (16) Does Emerson mean to teach that a man is better for his faults or merely that a man's faults may at times be of distinct advantage to him? (17) Why is it wise to throw one's self on the side of one's assailants (paragraph 39)? (18) Who is the "third silent party to all our bargains" (paragraph 40)? (19) "If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more" (paragraph 40). If you had a hard teacher or one whom you did not like, would it be wise to refuse to do your best work for him? Why? (20) What is Emerson's definition of a mob (paragraph 41)? Why is it a good one? (21) In connection with paragraph 41 read paragraph 17 of the essay on "Heroism" and the note on Alexander Lovejoy (p. 514) as an example of mob violence. Can you give other examples? (22) Is the doctrine of compensation fatalistic, that is, does it free us from the duty of attempting to do something worth while in life? (Read paragraph 42, and note the discussion of the nature of the soul which immediately follows.) (23) Can you really understand all that is said in paragraph 43? Try to express the thought in your own words. (24) Why is the criminal always punished, even though we do not see any "stunning confutation" (paragraph 44) of his deeds? (25) Most children wish to find a pot of gold. Why does Emerson say he no longer wishes to do this (paragraph 46)? (26) "I am my brother and my brother is me" (paragraph 47). What Bible story does this suggest? (27) In what sense are Jesus and Shakespeare fragments of the soul? "His virtue . . . his wit"; whose virtue and whose wit (paragraph 47)? (28) Under what conditions may we make absolute gain without suffering loss (paragraphs 45 and 46)? Can you give examples from your own experience when calamities have strengthened and helped you in your development (paragraph 50)? (29) Locate in the text and memorize the following passages: 1. "The world globes itself in a drop of dew." 2. "Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it." 3. "You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong." 4. "He is base — and that is the one base thing in the universe — to receive favors and render none." 5. "The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself." 6. "Do the thing, and you shall have the power; but they who do not the thing have not the power." 7. "Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass." 8. "Love, and ye shall be loved." 9. "We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out, that archangels may come in." 10. "The voice of the Almighty saith, 'Up and onward forevermore!'" (30) Select and copy five other passages which strike you as being especially good. (31) Select and copy six good figures of speech (see paragraphs 1, 10, 15, 16, 27, 30) and name each figure. (32) Note the short, snappy, epigrammatic predications in paragraphs 42 and 43. Is this a characteristic of Emerson's style? Point out similar examples in this essay and in the essay on "Heroism." (33) What is Emerson's habit in regard to using quotations or references from the Bible? See paragraphs 11, 15, 17, 18, etc., and the notes on these paragraphs.

Concord Hymn (Emerson)

INTRODUCTORY:

In the early editions of Emerson's poems the subtitle gives the date as April 19, 1836, but the monument was not completed and dedicated until July 4, 1837. (See Emerson's *Works*, Centenary Edition, Vol. IX, p. 454.) Emerson in the bi-centennial "Historical Address," September 12, 1835, gives full details of the battle and its significance. In this address he spoke of "the poor farmers who came up that day to defend their native soil." Emerson's grandfather, William Emerson, minister of Concord, watched the battle from his window in the Old Manse, and encouraged the "embattled farmers" to stand their ground. Says Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Of all Emerson's poems the 'Concord Hymn' is the most complete and faultless. . . . Compact, expressive, serene, solemn, musical, in four brief stanzas it tells the story of the past, records the commemorative act of the passing day, and invokes the higher power that governs the future to protect the memorial stone sacred to Freedom and her martyrs."

EXPLANATORY:

105 : 1. *rude bridge.* A rude wooden bridge spanned the river just where the battle was fought. The monument is placed within a few yards of this bridge.

105 : 2. *April's breeze.* The battle occurred April 19, 1775.

105 : 8. *creeps.* The Concord River is a very sluggish stream at this point.

105 : 10. *votive stone.* A stone set up in fulfillment of a vow. The first stanza of Emerson's "Hymn" is now engraved on one face of the monument.

105 : 11. *redeem.* Here used in the sense of recall. Why did Emerson use this word?

105 : 13. *Spirit.* The spirit of liberty or freedom.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What kind of poem is this? (2) The first two stanzas give us what? The third stanza treats of what? To what does the poet appeal in the final stanza? (3) Give the story of the battle as recorded in your textbook on United States history. (Read "Paul Revere's Ride" in this connection.) Notice how perfectly the lyric motive of patriotic reverence and gratitude is embodied. (4) Which do you

think will be more enduring, Emerson's "Hymn" or the monument itself? (5) What is the exact meaning of *flood* in line 1? In what sense was "the shot heard round the world"? (6) In what rhythm and meter is the poem written? Notice in reading the lines rhythmically that certain variations of the regular iambic measure occur here and there. In the first line the first foot (*By the*) is a pyrrhic, or two light syllables; but this is compensated for in the second foot (*rude bridge*) by a spondee, or two heavy, full syllables. In reading lines 6 and 11, the words *conqueror* and *memory* should be compressed into two syllables instead of three. In line 13 the first foot (*Spirit*) is a trochee, and thus inversion of the regular iambic rhythm occurs in this instance. These variations are just frequent enough to avoid monotony of movement. (7) Memorize the poem.

The Rhodora (Emerson)

INTRODUCTORY:

In the third chapter of *Nature* (1836) Emerson said, "The world thus exists to the soul to satisfy the desire of beauty. This element I call an ultimate end. No reason can be asked or given why the soul seeks beauty. Beauty, in its largest and profoundest sense, is one expression of the universe. God is the all-fair. Truth and goodness and beauty are but different faces of the same All." In a later essay on "The Poet" this same idea is advanced. "The world is not painted or adorned, but is from the beginning beautiful; and God has not made some beautiful things, but Beauty is the creator of the universe." "The Rhodora" is a poetic expression of this idea in concrete form. It was first published in 1839.

EXPLANATORY:

106 : 2. *Rhodora.* A handsome shrub of the genus *Rhododendron;* it bears beautiful clusters of purple flowers in early spring before its leaves appear. Read, if possible John Fox Jr.'s beautiful story, "The Purple Rhododendron."

106 : 10. *This charm is wasted.* Compare Gray's "Elegy,"

> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

106 : 12. *Beauty is its own excuse for being.* Compare Keats's

> Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.
> —*Ode on a Grecian Urn.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How is the lyric impulse, that is, the object of beauty which arouses the emotion, the flower, described in the first eight lines? Do you get a good mental picture? By what means? (2) What philosophical application or explanation is made in the last eight lines? (3) How does the flower "cheapen the array" of the redbird? (4) Read the quotation from Gray (note on line 10), and determine whether Emerson seems to agree with him that the sweetness or beauty of a flower can really be wasted. (5) In the last four lines the poet apostrophizes the flower. What is the lyric effect of this? (6) Memorize the whole poem, or at least the heart of it, lines 11 and 12.

The Humble-Bee (Emerson)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was written in May, 1837. In his *Journal* for May 9, Emerson wrote, "Yesterday in the woods I followed the humble-bee with rhymes and fancies fine." It was first published in 1839 in the *Western Messenger*, edited by Reverend James Freeman Clarke. In the letter accompanying the verses, Emerson wrote, "Here are the verses. They have pleased some of my friends, and so may please some of your readers." Longfellow said that the poem contained "much of the quintessence of poetry."

EXPLANATORY:

106 : 3. *Let them sail for Porto Rique.* Let those who will sail for Porto Rico. Why is the name of the island slightly changed here?

107 : 16. *Epicurean.* A follower of Epicurus (died 270 B.C.), a Greek philosopher who taught that men should seek the highest kinds of pleasure in life. Here accented Epicu'rean instead of Epicure'an as ordinarily. Why?

107 : 17. *prithee.* A shortened form of *pray thee.*

107 : 37. *Indian wildernesses.* The tropic regions of southern India.

107 : 38. *Syrian peace.* Syria in Asia Minor is noted for its mild, enervating climate.

107 : 38. *immortal leisure.* The gods on Mount Olympus are said to have immortal leisure.

107 : 43. *daffodels.* Daffodils. Why is the form changed?

107 : 45. *succory.* Same as chicory. It has large heads of blue flowers.

108 : 60. *Thou already slumberest.* The humble-bee, or bumble-bee, hibernates, or lies dormant during the winter months.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How is the humble-bee characterized in the first stanza? In the second? (2) Select the most striking line in the first stanza; in the second. (3) What is the exact meaning of line 19? (4) In which stanza does the poet describe the time when the bee comes? (5) What is the effect on the poet of the drowsy hum of the insect (paragraph 4)? (6) Name the kinds of flowers listed in paragraph 5. What lesson can we draw from this stanza? (7) What lesson is drawn in the final stanza? (8) With the foregoing questions as a guide, make an outline of the poem. (9) The meter is called trochaic tetrameter catalectic. See the discussion of English metrics, pp. 631-636, and explain just what this means. The rime is usually in couplets, and the number of couplets varies from stanza to stanza. What peculiarities of rime do you find in the first stanza? Why are the following lines especially musical: "Epicurean of June," "But violets and bilberry bells," "Columbine with horn of honey"?

Days (Emerson)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem, though written several years earlier, appeared in the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1857. Oliver Wendell Holmes in his *Life of Emerson* calls attention to a prose passage in

Emerson's "Works and Days," which expresses the same thought as that in the poem: "The days are ever divine as to the first Aryans. They come and go like muffled and veiled figures, sent from a distant friendly party; but they say nothing, and if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away." Emerson was himself partial to the little poem, and many others have selected "Days" as the most perfect gem of all Emerson's poetry. It is particularly remarkable as a reflective lyric cast in blank verse instead of rime.

EXPLANATORY:

108 : 1. *hypocritic.* That is, muffled so as to conceal their real character.

108 : 7. *pleached.* Intertwined with branches, surrounded by a hedge.

108 : 11. *fillet.* A ribbon or band around the head.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Under what figure are the days presented? (2) Why are they called hypocritic? Is the word used in a derogatory sense? (3) Why are they placed in marching order and in endless single file? (4) What is symbolized by diadems and fagots? (5) How is the personal application made in the last five lines? (6) Why is one particular day singled out for the application? (7) Why does this day pass in silence, showing a look of scorn? (8) Read the passage quoted in the introductory note above, and draw a comparison between the poetical and the prose expression of the same idea. Which appeals to you more? Try to make out from this the real difference between poetry and prose. (9) In what meter is the poem written? Scan the lines, noting particularly the frequent inversions, the cesural pauses, and the run-on lines. (See paragraph on "pauses," p. 631.) Can a successful lyric be written in blank verse?

The Ambitious Guest (Hawthorne)

INTRODUCTORY:

"The Ambitious Guest" was first published anonymously in the *New England Magazine*, June, 1836. It was later included in the enlarged edition of *Twice-told Tales* (1842), and it has since been frequently reprinted as one of the most perfect specimens of Hawthorne's art. The story is based on the following incident in John H. Spaulding's *Historical Relics of the White Mountains:* "Some time in June — before the great 'slide' in August, 1826 — there came a great storm, and the old veteran, Abel Crawford, coming down the Notch, noticed the trees slipping down, standing upright, and as he was passing Mr. Willey's, he called and informed him of the wonderful fact. Immediately, in a less exposed place, Mr. Willey prepared a shelter to which to flee in case of immediate danger; and in the night of August 28th, that year, he was, with his family, awakened by the thundering crash of the coming avalanche. Attempting to escape, that family, nine in number, rushed from the house, and were overtaken and buried alive under a vast pile of rocks, earth, trees, and water. By a remarkable circumstance, the house remained uninjured, as the slide divided about four rods back of the house (against a high flat rock), and came down on either side, with overwhelming power." Of the nine persons who were overwhelmed in the avalanche, the bodies of all but three were later found. Visitors to the spot have erected a cairn of small stones to the memory of the three unrecovered children.

EXPLANATORY:

109 : 12. *Notch of the White Hills.* The Notch in the White Mountains in western New Hampshire was rediscovered in 1771. "The Notch is a narrow rent, extending more than two miles between towering crags," says Spaulding. "The entrance of this wonderful chasm is about twenty-two feet wide, forming in itself a strange natural gateway. . . . From a little beaver meadow the Saco river rises northerly from this gateway, and, struggling down its narrow bounds, shares with the road its wide gulf; and, having passed through the mountain, bears its tribute onward to the ocean."

113 : 145. *Mount Washington.* One of the peaks of the White Mountains. Consult a map of the New England states and locate the several geographical references.

114 : 192. *the Flume.* "Below [Silver Cascade] a short distance, on the same side, falls another stream, clear and beautiful. This, from having worn a channel deeply into the rock, is called *The Flume.* In one place the stream leaps a hundred feet; and its whole course from the clouds down is foamy and wild."—Spaulding, *Historical Relics*, p. 50.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the theme of this story? Is it suggested in the title? (2) Read the incident upon which the story is based (introductory note) and show just what Hawthorne has added for the purpose of developing his theme. (3) Does he open the story with the setting, action, or characterization? (4) Why does he make the interior scene one of happiness and cheer? (5) By what means and why is the daughter of seventeen made prominent? (6) How is the guest received? (7) At what point is the first intimation of danger from the slide introduced? (8) Give a description of the guest's character. (9) Read the paragraph beginning "The secret of the young man's character," and see if you can detect an autobiographic note in it. (10) Why does Hawthorne make the youth say, "I cannot die till I have achieved my destiny"? (11) What effect had the youth's dream on each member of the family? Does this enhance the unity or totality of effect? (12) Relate their ambitions and say whether each is suited to the character expressing it. (13) Just why does Hawthorne not permit any one of these dreams to come true? Suppose, for instance, that the ludicrous wish of the little boy had been acted upon, what would have been the result? (14) The daughter's wish is not clearly expressed. How does the author artistically suggest what was in her heart? (15) Why is the grandmother's wish put last? What makes it so grewsome and effective in this place? (16) Why do you suppose the author made the strangers hesitate and then go on by the cabin? Were they lost? Would they have harmonized with the interior scene? (17) Read the passage beginning "I wonder how mariners feel," line 283. How does this foreshadow the actual catastrophe of the story? (18) Determine the exact point of the climax of the story. How is it made powerful in its imaginative appeal? (19) Why is the last paragraph

devoted to the ambitious guest? Is there really any other ambitious character in the story? Can you decide, then, "whose was the agony of that death moment"? (20) Compare this youth with the youth in Longfellow's "Excelsior." (21) Go over the story carefully and collect all the words or phrases which help to make up the dominant tone of impending tragedy and thus foreshadow the catastrophe. For example, in the very first sentence, the fire is said to be made from "the *splintered ruins* of great trees that came *crashing down the precipice*." (22) Read the famous extract from Poe's criticism of Hawthorne's *Tales*, beginning "A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale" (p. 348), and determine for yourself just how nearly "The Ambitious Guest" comes to fulfilling those requirements.

The Great Carbuncle (Hawthorne)

INTRODUCTORY:

This story was first published in one of the erstwhile popular annuals, *The Token*, for 1837. It was also included in the first edition of *Twice-told Tales* in that year. Spaulding in his *Historical Relics of the White Mountains* records that there were numerous legends about the wonderful carbuncles hanging from the crags in the White Mountains. Many "carbuncle hunters," or "seekers," came to the mountains, but none ever reported the finding of one of the marvelous stones. One reason advanced as to why no one could find any trace of these great carbuncles was that an old Indian had pronounced "the red man's curse" upon the pale-faced gem-seekers. "When he died, his last wish was . . . that the Great Spirit would send a black storm of fire and thunder, and splinter the crags, and roll down the carbuncles with mighty avalanches, and bury them deeply in the valleys, beneath the ruins of rocks and trees" (Spaulding, p. 31). Hawthorne took this legend and made the quest of the great carbuncle a symbol of the human search for happiness, or the desire for earthly glory of one kind or another. There is no direct hint of the germ of the story in his *American Note Books*, but one or two entries approach this theme rather closely. For instance, "some very famous jewel or other thing, much talked of all over the world. Some person to meet with it, and get possession of it in some unexpected manner amid homely circumstances" (p. 109). Or, "A man will undergo great toil and hardship for ends that must be many years distant, — as wealth or fame, — but none for an end that may be close at hand,— as the joys of heaven" (p. 107). Or again, "A person or family long desires some particular good. At last it comes in such profusion as to be the great pest of their lives" (p. 27).

EXPLANATORY:

118 : 2. *Crystal Hills.* The White Mountains in western New Hampshire were sometimes called Crystal Hills from the number of crystals found there.

118 : 11. *Amonoosuc(k).* The Wild Amonoosuc, one of the upper branches of the Lower Amonoosuc, which rises in the White Mountains and flows west and south into the Connecticut.

120 : 58. *Doctor Cacaphodel.* Doctor Bad-odor.

120 : 66. *Ichabod Pigsnort.* *Ichabod* means "bereft of glory."

Note how satirical Hawthorne is in naming the mere seekers after wealth. Compare "Gathergold" in "The Great Stone Face."

120 : 68. *Mr. Norton's church.* John Norton (1606–1663) was the successor of John Cotton as minister in the old First Church at Boston.

120 : 72. *pine-tree shillings.* A silver coin engraved with an image of a pine tree on one side. See Hawthorne's story of "The Pine-Tree Shillings" in *Grandfather's Chair.*

121 : 114. *Captain Smith.* Captain John Smith visited the coast of New England in 1614.

124 : 206. *the Great Mogul's best diamond.* The Koh-i-noor, now in the possession of the British government, was once owned by the Great Mogul of Delhi, India.

125 : 233. *Grub Street.* A street in London formerly frequented by needy poets. It is now called Milton Street.

126 : 277. *in rerum natura.* In the nature of things.

128 : 360. *cairn.* A mound of loose stones erected as a memorial.

133 : 540. *Persian idolater.* The ancient Persians worshiped the sun.

133 : 542. *the great fire of London.* Occurred in 1666. This, together with the references to Captain Smith and Mr. Norton's church above, fixes the approximate date of the setting of the story.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What kind of story would you call this? (The allegory is so naturally and spontaneously wrought out that we almost forget that the characters are mere types of mankind and that the search for the great carbuncle is nothing less than a symbol of the never-ceasing human search for happiness or the selfish desire to possess some earthly good.) (2) Under what circumstances does the author bring together the various characters? Describe them and tell what types they represent. (3) How are Hannah and Matthew differentiated from the other seekers? (See the suggestion in the second sentence of paragraph 1, and note that they are described in a separate paragraph on p. 121.) (4) What was the one topic of conversation in the hut that night? (5) Why is the spectacled Cynic made a sort of spokesman for the company? (Note how the author thus secures a natural means for his satiric and ironic strokes, and thus also adds a touch of grim humor.) (6) Tell in detail just what each one of the seekers desired to do with the carbuncle, and show how the Cynic gives each an ironic thrust. (7) What touch differentiates the plans of the young couple from those of the other seekers? Were they entirely selfish in their desires? (8) What does the author say about the Cynic who did not believe in the Great Carbuncle, calling it "the Great Humbug"? (9) What is suggested by the appearance of the strange light in the midst of the Cynic's speech? Do you suppose Hannah and Matthew were among those who saw it, or was it visible only to those who were so eager and feverish in the search that they could not sleep? (10) Is it an artistic touch to make the little wife the more ambitious of the two? (Note how the author works out this point in making her urge Matthew on, and in making her the last of the two to give up the quest but the first to give out in strength.) (11) Is the quest of the married couple really an allegorical presentation of average everyday

human life? How so? (12) Why were the two almost lost in the mountain heights? (13) Why were they the only ones allowed to understand and appreciate the meaning of the wonderful light? (14) What happened to each of the other seekers? Do you think each got just what he deserved? (15) In what speech of Matthew's is the real secret of human happiness expressed (p. 132)? (16) What is the chief lesson you learn from the story? Is the moral obtrusive, that is, is it made too prominent for artistic effect? (17) Read aloud the paragraph beginning, "Out of the hollow of their hands," p. 132, and the climax passage on p. 129, beginning "Nor could the young bride" and continuing over two paragraphs, and comment on the quality of the thought and style. (18) Look over the story again, and see how it is constructed. Point out the sections dealing with the setting, the characters, the evening spent in preparation for the quest, the quest of Hannah and Matthew, the finding of the carbuncle (climax), the fate of the seekers, the conclusion. (19) Suggested subjects for compositions on Hawthorne: Write a story imitating Hawthorne's manner as nearly as possible (some of his own suggestions in *American Note Books* may be used. Several are given above in the introductory note on "The Great Carbuncle." Another suggestive one is the following: "A snake taken into a man's stomach and nourished from fifteen years to thirty-five, tormenting him most horribly. A type of envy or some other evil passion"); A Comparison of "The Great Stone Face" with "The Great Carbuncle"; A Comparison of Poe's Stories with Hawthorne's; The Charm of Hawthorne's Style; Hawthorne's Power of Description.

The Wedding-Knell (Hawthorne)

INTRODUCTORY:

This story was written in 1835, published in *The Token* for 1836, and included in the first edition of *Twice-told Tales* in 1837. Poe said " 'The Wedding Knell' is full of the boldest imagination — an imagination fully controlled by taste. The most captious critic could find no flaw in this production." See Poe's "Review of Hawthorne's *Twice-told Tales*," p. 345.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why does Hawthorne place this legend so far back in the past? Is it based on fact, or is it purely imaginary? (2) Explain the exact situation between the lovers. (3) Expound carefully the character of each. (4) Why was it arranged for the bride and her party to come to the church first? (5) Explain in detail the effect of the sound of the tolling bell. Do you suspect whose funeral knell is being rung? (6) How does Hawthorne artistically present to us the workings of Mrs. Dabney's conscience as the bridegroom and his friends enter? (7) What impression does the description of the funeral make upon your mind? (8) Develop the contrast as fully as you can from memory. (9) Do you think Mr. Ellenwood was cruel? Which of the two had been the more cruel? (10) What was the effect on Mrs. Dabney? Of her confession and contrition upon him? Is there a note of deep pathos here? (11) At one point in the story the minister sent an attendant to stop the tolling of the bell. Why does Hawthorne make it continue to toll until the very end of the story? What sound was

mingled with it at the close? (12) Is the story well named? (13) What is the effect of such a story on your mind? Do you like it? Do you feel that you understand life better after you have read it thoughtfully? (14) Characterize Hawthorne's style as shown in this selection.

The Great Stone Face (Hawthorne)

INTRODUCTORY:

There is a real profile of a man's face made by a certain freak of nature in the Franconia Notch of the White Mountains in New Hampshire. It is called "The Old Man of the Mountain." Hawthorne probably read about this peculiar natural phenomenon in Oakes's *White Mountain Scenery*, where a picture of the profile is reproduced. The germ of Hawthorne's story is found in the following entry in his *Note Book* for 1839: "The semblance of a human face to be formed on the side of a mountain, or in the fracture of a small stone, by a *lusus naturae* [freak of nature]. The face is an object of curiosity for a year or for a century, and by and by a boy was born whose features gradually assume the aspect of that portrait. At some critical juncture the resemblance is found to be correct. A prophecy might be connected." It was some years later that Hawthorne worked out this note into the well-known allegorical story, "The Great Stone Face." It appeared first in *The National Era* for January 24, 1850, and was included in the volume *Snow-Image and Other Twice-Told Tales* (1852). It is said that Hawthorne had certain prominent Americans in mind as he sketched the various characters — namely, Emerson for Ernest, Andrew Jackson for Old Blood-and-Thunder, and Webster for Old Stony Phiz; but he always veiled his fictitious creations most skilfully, so that there is nothing more than mere hints or suggestions of resemblance between his creations and the real characters supposed to be used as models.

EXPLANATORY:

143 : 3. *the Great Stone Face.* Where is the scene of the story laid? See the introductory note and also the illustration in Payne's *History of American Literature*, page 171.

144 : 30. *Titan.* One of the fabled giants of Greek mythology.

147 : 142. *Midas.* Everyone knows the story of the mythical King Midas, of Phrygia, who was granted his dearest wish — namely, that everything which he touched should turn to gold. Read Hawthorne's version of the story, "The Golden Touch," in *The Wonder Book.*

157 : 518. *Old Man of the Mountain.* See the introductory note.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the effect of opening the story with the concrete image of the mother and the child talking of the Great Stone Face? (2) How does the author introduce the long description of the Great Stone Face? Is the one-line paragraph effective? (3) Read the three descriptive paragraphs aloud and note the excellent rhythm and effective diction of the prose style. Which receives more attention, the outward features

or the expression of the Great Stone Face? (4) What evidences are given that the valley represents the world and that the Great Stone Face represents the spirit of nature or God brooding over and molding the lives of men? (5) Summarize the principal characteristics of the Great Stone Face. (6) When the description is finished, how does the author bring the reader back to the opening scene? (7) Is there any significance in the child's name? (8) Make a list of all the other names in the story and determine the allegorical significance of each. Compare these with the names of Bunyan's characters in *Pilgrim's Progress*, such as Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Christian, Faithful, and the like. (9) Why does the author make so much of the prophecy? (10) How had the prophecy grown up? (11) How did the different classes of people look upon the old legend? How did Ernest receive it? Is there any significance in these different attitudes? (12) Give orally the chief characteristics of the boy Ernest. (13) At this point (line 127), how much has the author done for his story? (Note particularly the introduction of the principal character, the elaboration of the setting, and the development of the prophecy as a motive for the plan or evolution of the story.) (14) Tell the story of Gathergold and his failure to measure up to the ideal represented in the Great Stone Face. (15) Point out some striking and artistic details in the description of Gathergold. (16) What bits of satire are introduced into the portrait? What nickname is given to Gathergold? (17) What significance is there in the fact that the public acclaimed Gathergold the exact image of the Great Stone Face while Ernest saw no resemblance between the two? Is this motif repeated in the two following supposed fulfilments of the prophecy? Does popular applause or approval practically always prove incorrect? (18) What is the real meaning of the whispered words of the Great Stone Face to Ernest, "He will come! Fear not, Ernest; the man will come!"? Should we always be hopeful of the ultimate realization of our ideals? (19) What part of Ernest's life is presented parallel with the appearance of Gathergold? (20) Is the plan of the story perfectly plain to you after you begin to read of Old-Blood-and-Thunder? Mrs. Hawthorne in a letter said that Hawthorne thought the story was inartistic because the plan was too mechanical and the moral too evident. Do you entirely agree with this criticism? (21) How does Hawthorne manage to add variety to each new section of the story? (22) Present orally the portraits of Old Blood-and-Thunder and Old Stony Phiz. (23) What periods of Ernest's life are made parallel with these two portraits? (24) What touches of humorous satire do you find in the portrayal of Old Stony Phiz? (25) It is said that Hawthorne did not admire Daniel Webster and took this means of expressing his dislike of that great statesman˙ Can you point out any resemblances or parallels between the life of Webster and the career of Old Stony Phiz? (26) How did Ernest's character develop during all these years? Make a list of his characteristics as a boy, as a young man, as a middle-aged man, and as an old man, and indicate just what parts of the story are parallel to these divisions of his life. (This outline may be used as the basis of a written composition.) (27) Why is the poet introduced last? Do you note any climactic order in the presentation of the different characters? (28) What general praise does Hawthorne bestow upon the poet, and why? Did the people recognize the poet at all? Why? (29) In just what way did the poet fail to fulfil the ideal? (30) Is the poet an appropriate person to first recognize and acclaim Ernest as the true likeness to the Great Stone Face? Are our poets usually the first to reveal new truths to us? (31) Describe the final scene of Ernest's evening discourse. (32) Is it artistic to suggest in the last lines of the story that Ernest still looked forward to the coming of one greater than himself? (33) Determine whether this is primarily a story of action, setting, or character. (34) Do you like allegorical stories like this one? Write a brief personal estimate of "The Great Stone Face" as a typical allegorical story.

Evangeline (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

The composition of *Evangeline* was begun in 1845, and the poem was completed and published in 1847. The origin of the poet's interest in the legend is significant because it shows the cordial relations which existed between two of our greatest writers. Nathaniel Hawthorne heard the legend from Reverend H. L. Conolly, of Salem, who learned the story from a French Canadian, an attendant at his church. In his notebook Hawthorne put down the legend thus: "H. L. C. heard from a French Canadian a story of a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage-day all the men of the Province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England,—among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him—wandered about New England all her lifetime, and at last, when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his deathbed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise." At a dinner in Longfellow's home, Craigie House, Cambridge, Mr. Conolly repeated the legend, saying that he had offered the material to Hawthorne as a plot for a tale, but apparently had not been able to get him to use it. Longfellow immediately asked Hawthorne to permit him to write a poem on the subject, and Hawthorne readily consented. Later, when *Evangeline* appeared, Hawthorne wrote an appreciative review of it and said in a letter to Longfellow that he had read the poem "with more pleasure than it would be decorous to express."

A brief historical outline is essential to the clear understanding of the poem. France colonized the northeastern coast of North America about 1604, and the English the eastern coast about 1620. There was a great struggle for supremacy going on between France and England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and naturally there was much contention and war between the French and English settlers in America. By the treaty of Utrecht, 1713, all that part of North America known as Nova Scotia was ceded by France to England. The country was still occupied by the French settlers, known as Acadians from the early name given to the peninsula by the French, imitating, it is said, the Indian name for this district; and these French settlers, because they differed so much from the English in manner, customs, and particularly religion, would not take the oath of allegiance and fight on the English side. They merely took the obligation to remain neutral in any further conflict between the French and English soldiers. In 1741 the English made a settlement at Halifax on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia, and naturally rivalry and envy sprang up between this colony and the French settlements on the west shore of the peninsula. In 1755 war broke out again, and on finding that the Acadians were violating their promise of neutrality, the English decided to remove them from the province and scatter them among the English colonies along the Atlantic coast. A cleverly conceived and skillfully executed plan put the Acadians entirely at the mercy of the English soldiers. On September 2 Colonel John Winslow, acting under the authority of Governors Lawrence of Nova Scotia and Shirley of Massachusetts, called all the men and boys over ten years of age to meet in the church at Grand-Pré on September 5 to hear the will of His Majesty George II with respect to their province. The story of the detention and deportation is vividly told in the poem. The English tried to keep members of the same families together, but naturally amid so much confusion and distress, some cruel separations were inevitable. Several thousands of the Acadians were scattered along the Atlantic coast as far south as Virginia, and later a colony of over six hundred made their way to southern Louisiana to join the French settlements already there.

The meter of the poem is the dactylic hexameter, the measure of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in Greek and of Vergil's *Aeneid* in Latin. Goethe used this meter in his *Hermann und Dorothea*, and because of the similarity of the themes, Longfellow is thought to have received the suggestion for the meter of *Evangeline* from the German poem. The classic meter is dependent upon syllable length, whereas English rhythm is dependent upon the regular recurrence of accented and unaccented syllables. In English, then, the dactylic hexameter line consists of six feet, each foot being composed of one accented syllable followed by two unaccented syllables. Sometimes one heavy syllable may be substituted for the two light or unaccented syllables, just as a spondee, or two long syllables, may be substituted for the one long and two short syllables of the dactyl. In reading the long hexameter line, it is necessary to find a pause for the voice, even though it be a slight one, at some point in each line. This pause is called the cesura. It may occur at any point after the first and before the last foot; and sometimes there is an additional or secondary pause, as in the following line:

/ ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ — — / ⌣⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ — —
Bearded with | moss, || and in | garments | green, || indis | tinct in the | twilight.

The third foot, *garments*, illustrates the spondaic foot, or the substitution of one syllable for the two light syllables of the dactyl. The pupil should be drilled on the scansion until he can read the lines smoothly and rhythmically. The long swing of the rhythm has been compared to the ebb and flow of "the deep-voiced neighboring ocean" whose "accents disconsolate answer the wail of the forest." The meter is peculiarly well suited to the melancholy theme of the poem.

Evangeline is generally accepted as Longfellow's masterpiece. Oliver Wendell Holmes so classed it, saying, "Of the longer poems of our chief singer, I should not hesitate to select *Evangeline* as the masterpiece, and I think the general verdict of opinion would confirm my choice. . . . From the first line of the poem, from its first words, we read as we would float down a broad and placid river, murmuring softly against its banks, heaven over it, and the glory of the unspoiled wilderness all around."

SUGGESTED PLAN OF LESSONS FOR "EVANGELINE"

First reading: Two lessons

The two parts should be assigned on successive days for rapid reading outside the class. The pupils should be asked to reproduce the narrative in detail by cantos. An outline of the whole poem should then be made by requiring the pupils to suggest suitable titles for the "Prelude," or Introduction, for the two larger Parts, for the five Cantos in each Part, and for the "Postlude," or Conclusion. Suggestions for this outline will be found in the general questions below. After this first reading most of these general questions may be answered by the pupils, but some of the more specific questions may be deferred until a later period during the study of the poem.

Study and analysis: Eleven lessons

One lesson on the "Prelude" and one on each of the cantos will make a good average assignment for closer study. In this study the notes should be carefully consulted, and specific exercises from the notes and thought questions should be prepared from day to day. Some of the questions may be assigned for written reports and some for classroom quizzes, either oral or written. The teacher must be the judge of the amount and character of work to be assigned to individual classes. Memory selections and short compositions on special topics may be interspersed from time to time.

Third reading: Five lessons

The pupils should be carefully drilled in scansion and rhythmic phrasing before any attempt at the final interpretative oral reading is made. They should be required to read the entire poem in sequence and in their best style. No part of the work is more important than this final oral reading of the complete poem. During the days while this reading is in progress, a long composition on the story as a whole or on some particular subject suggested by the study should be prepared by the pupils as a final exercise.

General questions on "Evangeline"

(1) Under what circumstances was the poem undertaken by Longfellow? (See introductory note.) (2) Relate the facts which make the setting or historical background of the poem. (3) Is the poem epic, lyric, or dramatic? (4) E. C. Stedman called *Evangeline* "the flower of American idyls." Explain just why he called the poem an idyl. (It is perhaps better to classify it as an epic, or narrative poem.) (5) What is the basic theme of the poem? (Suggestion: Summarize the whole story in one concise sentence.) (6) What would be a good title for each of the two parts? (Suggestion: Be sure to bring out in your answer the happiness and contentment in the first part and the sorrows of separation and wandering in the second.) (7) The "Prelude," or Prologue, strikes the dominant tone and suggests the nature and quality of the story. Canto I of Part I gives a description of Grand-Pré and its people, thus giving the setting and chief characters of the story; Canto II presents the lovers in all their happiness in Benedict's home, while Basil comes in to announce the arrival of the English ships; III relates the circumstances of the betrothal, which was practically equivalent to a marriage ceremony; IV relates the tragic interruption

of the betrothal; and v tells of the deportation and separation of the lovers along with all the other Acadians. Canto I of Part II relates the fortunes of the lovers in separation; II shows Evangeline journeying down the Mississippi River, while Gabriel passes upstream in the night; III gives the picture of Evangeline in Basil's home in Louisiana; IV tells of Evangeline's wanderings in search of Gabriel; v tells of the end of the search; in a brief "Postlude," or Epilogue, the poet describes the grave of Evangeline and reverts to the "Prelude," thus closing the poem with the identical note with which it opened. Reduce all this to a carefully made outline, using your own words and ideas as far as possible. (8) What is the dominant tone of the whole story? (9) Why do we enjoy a poem full of sadness, melancholy, sentiment, purity, endurance? (10) What do you think is the chief thing which makes this poem so universally popular? (11) What qualities of style help to make *Evangeline* a great work of art? (Suggestion: Diction, imagery, grace, simplicity, melody, beauty, idyllic pictures, rhythm, unity of tone and form — these would make good topics for discussion in answering this question.) (12) In what meter is the poem written (see introductory note)? (13) Scan ten lines after the following model:

/ ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ — —
This is the | forest pri | meval. The | murmuring | pines and the | hemlocks,
/ ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ — — / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ — —
Bearded with | moss, || and in | garments | green, || indis | tinct in the | twilight
/ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣
Stand like | Druids of | eld, || with | voices | sad and pro | phetic.

(14) Trace on the map on page 534 the wanderings of Evangeline, citing references from the text for each important point. (15) Suggested topics for themes: Beautiful Descriptions in the Poem; Figurative Language in *Evangeline;* A Character Sketch of Evangeline (or Gabriel, Basil, Benedict, Father Felician, René Leblanc); Catholic Life and Coloring in the Poem; The Home Life of the Acadians; Biblical Allusions in the Poem; The Diction of *Evangeline;* Superstitions and Legends of the Acadians; The Two Homes of Basil Lajeunesse; Evangeline's Journey Down the Mississippi; An Imaginary Description of Gabriel's Wanderings; Moral Lessons Drawn from the Poem; A Comparison of *Evangeline* with Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea.*

THE "PRELUDE" TO "EVANGELINE"

EXPLANATORY:

166 : 1. *primeval.* Original, uncut, virgin. Note that this word occurs twice in the "Prelude" and twice in the "Postlude." What is the effect of this repetition?

166 : 3. *Druids of eld.* Ancient Celtic priests. Why is *eld* preferred to *old?*

166 : 4. *harpers hoar.* White-haired minstrels. In what way are the pines like harpers with long beards and hair?

167 : 15. *Grande-Pré.* A French name meaning "great meadow." See lines 22, 23 for an interpretation of the name.

167 : 18. *List.* A poetic form; why is it preferred to *listen?*

167 : 19. *Acadie.* Nova Scotia; a name, perhaps of Indian origin, given by the French settlers to a large but vaguely defined territory including the present Nova Scotia. Compare the Parish of Acadia

and the term "Cajun" still in use as a designation of the descendants of the Acadiâns in Louisiana. Compare also the name *Arcadia*, applied in pastoral romance to a picturesque and idealized country in the Peloponnesus.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

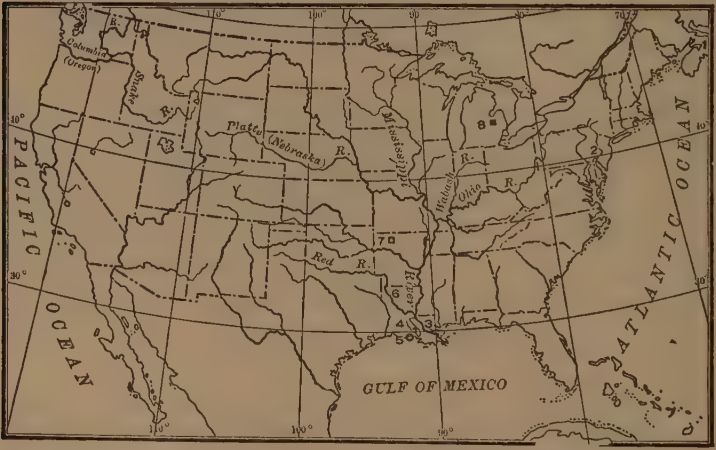
(1) What is the chief function of the "Prelude"? (2) What two large natural objects are singled out for personification in the opening passage, and why? (3) What is the dominant tone of the "Prelude"? (4) Point out seven words that indicate and emphasize this tone. (5) Point out in the second stanza three similes that suggest the general nature of the theme and thus emphasize the dominant tone. (6) In what four lines is the theme of the whole poem definitely stated? (7) Memorize these lines.

EVANGELINE I, 1

EXPLANATORY:

167 : 20. *Minas.* Locate in the Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia.

167 : 27. *cornfields.* Wheatfields. In English poetry *corn* practically always means wheat; Longfellow discusses the Indian corn in lines 1208–1215, but he calls it maize, not corn.



1 Grand Pré on Basin of Minas
2 Philadelphia
3 Acadian Coast
4 Atchafalaya River (Wachita willows +)
5 The Têche (Basil's home o)
6 Adayes (Natchitoches)
7 Ozark Mountains (The Mission ▫)
8 Saginaw River (Gabriel's lodge ▫)

167 : 29. *Blomidon.* A high promontory at the entrance of the Basin of Minas.

168 : 34. *Normandy.* A province in northern France, whence many of the settlers of Acadia came.

168 : 34. *Henries.* Early kings of France, probably Henry III (died 1589) and Henry IV (died 1610).

168 : 39. *kirtles.* The dress of the Acadian women, a sort of jacket or bodice with a skirt attached.

168 : 49. *Angelus.* A bell rung morning, noon, and evening, to remind Roman Catholics to repeat the prayer beginning "Angelus Domini" (Angel of the Lord), referring to the Angel Gabriel's annunciation to Mary, that she was to be the mother of the Savior. If possible study Millet's picture, "The Angelus," in this connection.

169 : 61. *Gentle Evangeline.* On December 8, 1845, while Longfellow was writing this poem, he recorded this note in his *Journal:* "I know not what name to give to — not my new baby, but my new poem. Shall it be 'Gabrielle,' or 'Celestine,' or 'Evangeline'?" Do you think he made a wise choice? What did he do with the first name?

169 : 68. *kine.* An old plural of *cow.* The breath of cattle is notably pure and sweet. The word *kine* occurs again in line 916.

169 : 72. *hyssop.* A plant used in the Jewish ordinance of purification. In the ordinance of the Passover a sprig of hyssop was used to sprinkle the lamb's blood over the door posts. See Exodus 12:22.

170 : 74. *beads . . . missal.* The rosary and mass-book used by the Roman Catholics.

170 : 87. *penthouse.* An overhanging shed.

170 : 90–91. *moss-grown bucket.* Compare Samuel Woodworth's poem, "The Old Oaken Bucket."

171 : 94. *seraglio.* The walled palace in which the sultans of Turkey keep their wives. Note the transferred epithet *feathered.*

171 : 96. *Peter.* Explain the biblical allusion. See Matthew 26:75.

171 : 100. *dove-cot.* A pigeon house. The dove, or pigeon, is a symbol of love and peace. See the same word in line 899.

171 : 107. *hem of her garment.* Explain the allusion; Matthew 9:20.

172 : 122. *plain-song.* A chant used in the Roman Catholic service.

172 : 130. *smithy.* Blacksmith shop. The word also occurs in "The Village Blacksmith." Compare Basil with the village blacksmith.

172 : 133. *nuns going into the chapel.* That is, the sparks disappeared like nuns going into the church.

172 : 137. *wondrous stone.* This was an old superstition. People believed the little stone had miraculous curative powers for certain diseases, and hence one was considered lucky to find it.

173 : 144. *Sunshine of Saint Eulalie.* If the sun shines clearly on Saint Eulalie's day (February 12), it is a sign that the apple harvest will be abundant. Scan the line to determine the correct accent of *Eulalie.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Locate Grand-Pré on your map, and describe the surroundings (lines 20–32). (2) Describe the village life (lines 33–57). Why does the poet make it all so ideally beautiful and happy? (3) What two characters are first introduced? (4) What impression do you get of Evangeline's disposition and character? (5) Why is Benedict's age given as "seventy *winters*" and Evangeline's as "seventeen *summers*"? (6) Which one of these two characters is more fully described? Why? (7) Comment on the beauty and force of the line, "When she had passed it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music." Determine by the rhythm the correct pronunciation of *exquisite.* (8) What concrete images are presented in the description of Benedict's home (lines 82–102)? Are these details well selected for the poet's purpose? Does

the picture give you the sense of plenty and peace and idyllic happiness? (9) How are the two chief characters introduced? (10) Why is so much said of the childhood associations of Gabriel and Evangeline (lines 119–140)? (11) What figures of speech do you find in lines 30, 50, 57 (paradox), 62 (metonymy), 63, 94 (transferred epithet), 128? (12) Why are "gossiping looms" and "whir of the wheels" effective (lines 41–42)?

EVANGELINE I, II

EXPLANATORY:

173 : 149. *sign of the Scorpion.* Scorpion is the eighth sign of the zodiac; it is late in October when the sun enters this sign.

173 : 150. *leaden.* Dull, gloomy, heavy. Note how the poet selects words and images which forebode calamity or misfortune.

173 : 153. *as Jacob of old.* Retell the story as recorded in Genesis 32, and note the appropriateness of the comparison.

174 : 159. *Summer of All-Saints.* November 1 is All-Saints' Day. We usually designate this season as Indian summer. Note how Longfellow has forced his dates here. The deportation actually took place on September 5–10. See question (2) below.

174 : 170. *Persian.* The Greek historian Herodotus tells us that Xerxes found a beautiful plane-tree and fell so much in love with it that he ordered it to be adorned with jewels and rich mantles.

176 : 205. *pewter plates on the dresser. Dresser* here means a sideboard or cupboard. In former times pewter plates and utensils were used by the better classes of people.

177 : 238. *Gaspereau.* A small river which empties into Minas near the village of Grand-Pré.

178 : 240. *his Majesty's mandate.* The king of England at this time was George II. The order was really signed by Lieutenant Colonel John Winslow and dated September 2, 1755. The proclamation called all the men and lads over ten years of age to assemble in the church to hear what his Majesty intended.

178 : 249. *Louisburg . . . Beau Séjour . . . Port Royal.* Places taken by the English from the French in previous wars, Port Royal (now Annapolis) in 1710, Louisburg in 1745, and Beau Séjour in 1755, just a short time before the deportation of the Acadians. It is said that several hundred Acadians were taken prisoners when Beau Séjour fell. This would seem to indicate that the English had just reasons to complain against the Acadians for failure to keep their promise of neutrality.

179 : 261. *glebe.* Soil, a poetic word.

179 : 267. *notary.* An officer authorized to take acknowledgments, draw up contracts, and the like.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How is the season of the year indicated in the opening lines? (2) Why has Longfellow forced the date forward here nearly two months? (Note the beautiful descriptive passages that follow.) (3) What general tone is struck in the first lines of stanza 1, and how is the contrast drawn in the description of the Summer of All-Saints? (4) Reproduce in your own words the pastoral picture of lines 171–198.

Why do you suppose Evangeline's heifer "bore the bell"? (5) Reproduce similarly the interior scene in Benedict's home (lines 199–217). *Evangeline* has been called a panorama of beautiful pictures. Do these scenes justify this statement? (6) By what signs did Benedict and Evangeline know who were coming when they heard footsteps on the outside? (7) Contrast Benedict's optimistic with Basil's pessimistic view regarding the purpose of the English soldiers. Which one was right? (8) Why was Benedict so happy on this particular night? Do you suppose that the fact that he was getting old had any effect on his desire to see Evangeline happily married? (9) What contract is referred to in line 259? Note how deftly and rapidly the lines here lead up to and prepare for the betrothal in the next canto. (10) Point out the figures of speech in lines 153, 162–163, 190, 228, 246. (11) Memorize lines 199–214.

EVANGELINE I, III

EXPLANATORY:

179 : 276. *an old French fort.* Port Royal before it was taken by the English in 1710. René Leblanc is a real historical character, the only one in the poem.

180 : 280. *Loup-garou.* A werwolf, in medieval superstition a man who had the power of changing into a wolf, in which form he devoured men. The superstitions mentioned in the following lines are still circulated in various forms.

180 : 287. *writ.* A poetic or archaic form of *written.* Until recently folklore was not really written down, but transmitted by tradition from generation to generation.

180 : 297. *irascible.* Easily angered, fiery.

181 : 306. *an ancient city.* Florence, Italy.

182 : 344. *draught-board.* Checker-board. In many communities the game of checkers is still called draughts.

183 : 348. *embrasure.* An enlarged space in the wall where a window is set.

183 : 354. *curfew.* From the old French *coufeu,* composed of *covrir* + *feu,* cover the fire.

184 : 381. Repeat the incident as related in Genesis 21:9–21.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the chief incident in this canto? (2) Give in your own words a brief sketch of the notary public. (3) Enumerate the superstitions mentioned. (4) Relate the legend of the statue of justice. Why is this legend appropriate just at this point in the story? (It foreshadows in a way Evangeline's own story.) (5) Was the betrothal ceremony equivalent to a marriage? Why does the notary speak of "the bride and the bridegroom"? (6) Describe the happy fireside scene after the betrothal. (7) What effects are produced by the full description of Evangeline's chamber and its contents? Does it indicate the girl's character? (8) Explain line 371. (9) Why is the feeling of sadness mentioned (line 376)? (10) Explain the force of the figures in lines 268, 270, 328–329, 351–352, 377–378, 380–381.

Evangeline I, iv

EXPLANATORY:

184 : 386. *hundred hands.* This suggests Briareus, the hundred-handed giant of Greek mythology. Note the appropriateness of the figure.

185 : 408. *gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.* Note the two contrasting meanings of *gayest.*

186 : 413. *Tous les Bourgeois*, etc. Titles of old French songs.

187 : 442. *sultry solstice.* The summer solstice is June 21. Explain why it is called solstice.

187 : 451. *imprecations.* Cursings.

188 : 461. *chancel.* The inclosed space in a church where the officiating priests retire. Why was Father Felician here, do you think?

188 : 466. *tocsin's alarum.* The alarm of a signal bell. A drum beat is sometimes used as a tocsin or signal of alarm.

189 : 474. *Lo! where the crucified Christ.* In Catholic churches there is always an image of Christ on the cross set up in a conspicuous place.

189 : 476. "*Father, forgive them.*" See Luke 23:34.

189 : 484. *Ave Maria.* The Latin hymn commemorating the angel Gabriel's salutation to the Virgin, beginning *Ave Maria*, "Hail, Mary!" See Luke 1:28.

189 : 486. *Elijah ascending to heaven.* Explain. See II Kings 2:11.

190 : 498. *ambrosial.* Ambrosia was the delicious food of the gods on Mount Olympus. In what sense is the adjective applied to the meadows here? Find a hint in line 500.

190 : 507. *the Prophet descending from Sinai.* Explain. See Exodus 34:29–35.

190 : 508. *Angelus.* See note on line 49. The Angelus is again mentioned in line 589.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Recall from your outline the theme or subject of this canto. At what point was the tragic action first introduced (see end of Canto I)? How was it foreshadowed in Canto III? How is it developed in this canto? (2) What is the effect aimed at in the idyllic, joyous scenes of the first two stanzas? (3) Point out half a dozen words which emphasize the dominant tone of happiness in the first stanza. (4) Why was Benedict giving this merrymaking at his home? (5) Describe the scene of the presentation of the king's proclamation and its effect. Notice how the poet pauses to make the long Homeric simile beginning "As, when the air" (line 442) between the delivery of the proclamation and its effect. (6) Give the substance of Father Felician's appeal to his people. (7) What is the effect on the reader of the ready response and the religious fervor of the prisoners? (8) Why do you suppose Evangeline prepared the supper in her home? Was it eaten? See line 515. (9) Read the end of Canto III, particularly lines 374–380, and note the contrast between them and the ending of Canto IV, lines 509–513. How is the situation reversed and what is the artistic effect? (10) What is meant by the "gloomier grave of the living" (line 513)? (11) How do you imagine Evangeline felt when she returned to her empty, lonely home? (12) What is

the artistic effect of the storm? (13) What tale is referred to in line 522? Recall how it was introduced and retell it. (14) Explain the appropriateness of the figures in lines 385–386, 410–411, 415, 442–447, 453–454, 465–466, 486, 506–507, 513. (15) Study out the balanced and parallel effects in lines 382–383 and 418–419. Find other examples of balance and parallel in the poem.

EVANGELINE I, V

EXPLANATORY:

191 : 524. *fifth day.* This is historically correct. The prisoners were locked in the church on September 5, 1755, and the deportation took place on September 10.

191 : 527. *neighboring hamlets.* Not only the people of Grand-Pré, but the settlers in the whole province were deported.

191 : 528. *ponderous wains.* Heavy wagons. *Wain* is now used only in poetry.

194 : 575. *refluent.* Flowing back, the outgoing tide. Why does the poet say the ocean *fled* from the shore?

194 : 577. *kelp.* A kind of seaweed.

194 : 579. *leaguer.* A camp.

195 : 597. *Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.* When the apostle Paul was being carried to Rome, a great storm arose and wrecked the vessel, casting the passengers and sailors on the island of Melita, or Malta, in the Mediterranean. Paul comforted and directed the people in a masterly way. See Acts 27 and 28 for the whole story.

195 : 605. *Benedicite.* Latin, "Be ye blessed." Pronounce in five syllables. Compare *benediction* and the proper name *Benedict.*

196 : 615. *Titan-like.* In Greek mythology, the Titans were the huge sons of Heaven and Earth. Briareus, the hundred-handed, was one of these giants, or Titans.

196 : 621. *gleeds.* Sparks, burning coals; a poetic word.

197 : 630. *Then rose a sound of dread.* Compare this passage with the description in "Kit Carson's Ride," p. 472.

198 : 657. *bell or book.* In the Catholic burial ceremony the *bell* is tolled for the passing soul while the ritual is being recited from the *book.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) This canto completes the tragic action of Part I. Recall the title of this canto from your outline. (2) The cock crowed cheerily in the midst of all this suffering. Is this a natural touch? (3) What pathetic reference is made in regard to the children (lines 531–532)? Did they know why they were hauling the household goods to the seashore? (4) Describe the procession to the seashore. (5) Why is it effective to place the lovers together for a brief moment? (6) It is said that the English officers tried to keep families together as far as possible. Is Longfellow justified in making the scene one of cruelty, distress, and heartlessness? (7) Describe the scene on the shore and in the village after the embarkation, and contrast it with the description of the happy village of Canto I. (8) Describe the burning of Grand-Pré (lines 618–640). What effect has this event on Benedict? On the reader's sympathy? (9) Why is it essential to the plan of the story to allow Benedict to die on the seashore before the deportation?

(10) What is the effect of his death on Evangeline? On the reader? (11) Contrast the character of Benedict with that of Basil.

EVANGELINE II, I

EXPLANATORY:

198 : 666. *Many a weary year.* Perhaps not more than ten years. Note the transferred epithet. Why were the years weary, and why did they seem so many? If, as we are told, Evangeline was seventeen at the time of the opening of the story, she would still be a young woman (see line 683).

198 : 670. *on separate coasts.* The Acadians were distributed among the English settlements from New England to the South Atlantic colonies. Some of our characters (see lines 1258 ff.) were landed at Philadelphia. About a year after the deportation, several hundred of the Acadians migrated to lower Louisiana to join the French settlements there. Among these were, doubtless, Gabriel and Basil.

199 : 674. *savannas.* Plains, level tracts; from the Old Spanish.

199 : 675. *Father of Waters.* This is the meaning of the Indian word *Mississippi.*

199 : 677. *mammoth.* A large prehistoric elephant, remains of which have been found scattered over the central portions of North America.

200 : 705. *Coureurs-des-Bois.* Literally "runners of the woods"; a general term for trappers and hunters. *Voyageur* in line 707 is another French word meaning traveler or transportation agent for the fur traders.

200 : 713. *to braid St. Catherine's tresses.* Saint Catherine was the patron saint of virginity; hence to braid St. Catherine's tresses means to remain unmarried.

201 : 732. *shards.* Broken pieces of pottery.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How much time do you think is supposed to have passed between Part I and the main action of Part II? (Consider, for example, what Basil had accomplished during this time.) (2) What function does this canto serve for the whole of Part II? (3) Give a general summary of the experiences of the dispersed Acadians. (4) Why is Evangeline's name not mentioned in line 681, and Gabriel's in line 698? (5) Where (see line 1258) and how was Evangeline spending these first years? (6) Why was Gabriel not looking for Evangeline during this time and later? (Remember that this is a tale of "the beauty and strength of *woman's* devotion.") (7) Comment on the expressiveness of the personification in line 676; the diminishing climax in line 699. (8) Point out in this canto two Homeric similes, that is, long, fully detailed and expounded comparisons. (9) Memorize lines 715–717 and 720–727.

EVANGELINE II, II

EXPLANATORY:

202 : 741. *Beautiful River.* The Indian name Ohio is said to mean "beautiful river."

202 : 750. *Acadian coast.* The country along the banks of the Mississippi River below Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is still sometimes called the Acadian coast. Locate Opelousas, now a town in St. Landry's Parish.

203 : 759. *pelicans.* The pelican is used as an emblem on the seal of the state of Louisiana.

204 : 782. *shrinking mimosa.* The sensitive plant which folds or closes its leaves at night or when shaken or disturbed. In the South the children touch it and exclaim "Be ashamed!" and the plant seems to hide itself in shame. Is the epithet well chosen?

205 : 809. *lotus.* The American lotus, or Nelumbium, a large, yellow-flowering aquatic plant of the lily family. It has broad shield-shaped leaves, and the flower-stems rise from two to six feet out of shallow water.

205 : 821. *the ladder of Jacob.* Explain the allusion. See Genesis 28: 12 ff.

207 : 853. *buoy.* Pronounced in one syllable, boi′. Why?

207 : 856. *Têche.* This river empties into Grand Lake, a part of the Atchafalaya. The settlements of St. Maur and St. Martin are on the Têche. St. Martin is now a parish in southern Louisiana.

208 : 878. *Bacchantes.* The female revelers in the orgies in honor of Bacchus, the god of wine. Is the allusion appropriate?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why did Longfellow choose the month of May for Evangeline's voyage down the Mississippi? (2) Trace an imaginary line of Evangeline's wanderings from Philadelphia to Basil's home on the Têche, touching at each of the places mentioned in this canto. (3) Point out some of the most attractive descriptive passages in this canto. (4) How do you think Longfellow could have drawn such wonderful pictures without ever having seen the countries he described? (5) Why was it necessary and appropriate to have Father Felician attend Evangeline as a guide on this part of her journey? Did he stay with her all the way through? Why? (6) How did the travelers manage to pass from the Mississippi to the Atchafalaya River? From the Atchafalaya to the Têche? (See a large map of Louisiana.) (7) Describe fully the scene on the lakes of the Atchafalaya where Evangeline's party stopped for the night. (8) Why does the poet make so full a description of the scene "under the boughs of Wachita willows"? What point in the narrative do we reach here? (9) Compare Jacob's dream with Evangeline's. (10) How are suspense and tenseness gained by the appearance of the light, swift boat (lines 827 ff.)? (11) How near did the lovers come to meeting? (12) What premonitions did Evangeline have? (13) Notice the beautiful and expressive stanza with which the canto closes. Why does the poet make the scene so brilliant and the heart of the maiden so hopeful and happy? (14) Explain lines 868–869. (15) Determine by the rhythm the pronunciation of the proper names *Opelousas*, line 750; *Plaquemine* (two syllables), line 766; *Atchafalaya*, line 807; *Wachita*, line 816. (16) Define and give the derivation of *sombre*, line 752; *wimpling*, line 758; *tenebrous*, line 769; *cope*, 819; *pendulous*, line 822; *credulous*, line 848. (17) Memorize the description of the mocking-bird.

EVANGELINE II, III

EXPLANATORY:

209 : 889. *mystic mistletoe.* The mistletoe was held sacred by the old Druid priests. They cut the mistletoe with a golden knife and preserved it with great veneration. See the next line.

210 : 913. *gaiters and doublet.* The doublet was a close-fitting body garment with sleeves; gaiters were coverings for the legs, usually made of leather and fastened at the side.

210 : 914. *sombrero.* A broad-brimmed hat; from the Spanish *sombra*, a shade.

211 : 952. *Adayes.* An old Spanish settlement near the present town of Natchitoches on the Red River.

211 : 956. *Fates.* The three Fates, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, were supposed to control the destinies of men. Note that the Fates were against Gabriel, but not in the way Basil meant.

212 : 961. *Olympus.* A mountain in Greece, the abode of the gods.

212 : 970. *ci-devant.* A French word meaning former.

213 : 979. *illuming.* From *illume*, a poetical form of *illumine.*

213 : 984. *Natchitoches.* Pronounced here in four syllables, but now in three. See pronouncing list of proper names, pp. 627–630.

214 : 1006. *a spider . . . in a nutshell.* See the reference to this superstition in line 285. Do you know of similar superstitious cures that are still in use among the negroes and uneducated classes?

214 : 1009. *Creoles.* Settlers of French or Spanish descent in lower Louisiana.

215 : 1033. *Carthusian.* An order of monks founded by St. Bruno in 1086, in the Chartreuse valley of the Alps. They were noted for their austerity, one of their practices being that of maintaining almost unbroken silence.

216 : 1044. *Upharsin.* "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin" were the words written upon the wall of Belshazzar's palace by the mysterious hand. See Daniel 5:25–28, where the interpretation is given.

216 : 1057. *oracular caverns.* An allusion to the famous Pythian oracle of Apollo at Delphi; the messages were delivered by a priestess from a dark cave or cavern.

217 : 1063–1064. *Prodigal Son . . . Foolish Virgin.* Relate these parables as told in Luke 15 and Matthew 25. How far may they be applied to Gabriel and Evangeline? Why is Father Felician trying to be humorous?

217 : 1075. *garrulous.* Talkative.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Evangeline is now in Basil's home in Louisiana. The canto gives us a picture of luxuriance and plenty similar to and yet different from that of Benedict's home in Grand-Pré. Draw out the points of similarity and contrast. (2) How is the pathetic revelation of Gabriel's departure made? Is there much emotion compressed in Evangeline's twice-repeated query? (3) How did Basil entertain his guests, and why? Has his character changed with his circumstances? (4) Recall the previous canto in which Michael the fiddler appeared, and draw a comparison of the two scenes. (5) Why does the poet make Evangeline steal forth alone into the garden? What thoughts and memories

were stirring in her mind? (6) What plan for overtaking Gabriel was decided upon? Why would it have spoiled the story to have left Evangeline behind at Basil's home while the men went to overtake Gabriel? (7) Why does Basil jokingly refer to bringing Gabriel back to his prison (line 958)? Note a similar effort at humor on the part of Father Felician in lines 1063–1064. (8) Judging from Basil's description in lines 945–952, what effect do you think separation had on Gabriel's character? (9) Point out the figures of speech in lines 906–911. (10) What play on words is found in line 983? (11) Compare the imitative and alliterative effects of line 1019 with those of line 729. Which of the two do you think is the better? (12) In line 1025 the sea is again referred to. Compare line 729, "Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean," and read again lines 5–6, 1398–1399. The deep-voiced, melancholy monotone of the ocean is thus made a sort of recurring or dominant note throughout the poem. Is this artistic? (13) Compare the metaphor in line 1041 with that in lines 351–352. Which of the two do you think is the more beautiful? (14) Explain the figure in lines 1060–1061.

EVANGELINE II, IV

EXPLANATORY:

218 : 1082. *Oregon . . . Walleway . . . Owyhee.* The Oregon is now the Columbia River. The branch of the Columbia called the Snake is probably here intended; the Walleway and Owyhee are its tributaries.

218 : 1083. *Wind-river Mountains*, etc. These are in western Wyoming near Yellowstone Park. The *Sweetwater* River is in central Wyoming. It forms one branch of the Platte River. *Nebraska* is the old name for the Platte. Look up these localities on your map.

218 : 1085. *Fontaine-qui-bout.* French for "Fountain which boils," or boiling spring. There are many hot springs in the Spanish sierras, that is, in the mountain ranges in lower Colorado.

218 : 1091. *amorphas.* The amorpha is a shrub called false indigo, or lead plant. It bears large spikes of purple or violet flowers.

218 : 1095. *Ishmael's children.* Ishmael was the son of Abraham and Hagar and was a wanderer; hence any nomadic tribes, like the Indians, may be called Ishmael's children.

218 : 1102. *anchorite monk.* A recluse or hermit. Explain the figurative use here. Why is *taciturn* appropriate?

219 : 1106. *Ozark Mountains.* The Ozark Plateau. In southwest Missouri and extending through northwest Arkansas.

219 : 1114. *Fata Morgana.* A mirage observed in Sicily and in southern Italy.

219 : 1121. *Coureur-des-Bois.* See the note on line 705.

220 : 1139. *Mowis.* The legends of Mowis and Lilinau (line 1145) are recorded in Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches*, the principal sourcebook of Longfellow's *Hiawatha*.

222 : 1175. *Jesuit Mission.* There are still many ruins of old Jesuit missions in Texas, California, and other western states. The one referred to by Longfellow was located perhaps somewhere in Arkansas in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains.

222 : 1182. *susurrus.* A Latin onomatopoetic word for "whisper." It is not a plural form, as the context might lead one to think.

224 : 1211. *mendicant.* Begging. The metaphor makes the crows the black-robed, begging monks who enter the cornfields as their cloisters.

224 : 1219. *compass-flower.* The compass plant is a tall, rough, bristly herb of the aster family. The leaves are said to assume a vertical position with their edges north and south. Longfellow later corrected this passage to "vigorous plant" (line 1217) and "Here in the houseless wild" (line 1220).

224 : 1226. *asphodel flowers . . . nepenthe.* The asphodel is a species of lily. In Greek mythology it is the flower of the Elysian fields where the dead heroes sleep; *nepenthe* is an opiate that is supposed to make one forget all pain and sorrow.

225 : 1233. *Saginaw River.* Locate this in Michigan.

225 : 1241. *Moravian Missions.* The Moravians were a mild Protestant sect who came from central Europe. They set up "Gnadenhutten," or "Tents of Grace," in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and elsewhere.

225 : 1242. *camps . . . of the army.* This was about 1776 to 1781. What army is referred to?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) The opening paragraph of this canto describes what section of our country? Do you suppose Gabriel went so far west as this? (2) What is the poet's purpose in introducing the Shawnee woman? What is the effect on Evangeline of the Indian's tales about phantom lovers? (3) Why do you suppose the Indians called the priest "Black Robe chief"? (4) When Evangeline reached the Mission, what did she hear of Gabriel, and what did she determine to do? (5) Do you think by this time she had given up hope of seeing Gabriel? Give a quotation to prove your point. (6) How is the slow passage of time indicated in the stanza beginning "Slowly, slowly" (line 1207)? (7) Explain carefully the extended or Homeric simile in lines 1217–1226. (8) Why did Evangeline eventually leave the Mission, and with what results? (9) After this last disappointment do you think she heard any further rumors of Gabriel? (10) Summarize Evangeline's life from this time on. (11) Point out the parallelism and contrast in lines 1245–1246. (12) What is foreshadowed or suggested in the metaphor of lines 1249–1251? (13) Memorize lines 1217–1226.

EVANGELINE II, V

EXPLANATORY:

225 : 1252. *Delaware's waters.* Locate the Delaware River.

225 : 1253. *sylvan . . . Penn.* Note the pun on Pennsylvania.

226 : 1256. *streets still re-echo the names of the trees.* Some of the principal streets of Philadelphia are Chestnut, Walnut, Pine, Spruce.

226 : 1257. *Dryads.* These were the spirits or nymphs supposed to dwell within the trees.

227 : 1298. *a pestilence.* This refers to the yellow-fever epidemic of 1793.

228 : 1308. *almshouse.* Longfellow said that it would be hard to establish the identity of the house. In 1826 he went to Philadelphia for a few days. In a letter of 1876 he said, "A great many years ago, strolling through the streets of Philadelphia, I passed an old almshouse within high brick walls, and with trees growing in its enclosure. The quiet and seclusion of the place —'the reserve,' as your poor woman so happily said—impressed me deeply. This was long before the poem was written and before I had heard the tradition on which it was founded. But remembering the place, I chose it for the final scene." Samuel Longfellow's *Life of Longfellow*, Vol. III, p. 259.

228 : 1312. "*The poor ye always have with you.*" Quoted with some slight inversion from Mark 14:7. Why the inversion?

229 : 1326. *Christ Church.* The Episcopal church still standing on Second Street north of Market. Benjamin Franklin is buried in this old churchyard.

229 : 1328. *Wicaco.* An old Swedish settlement near Philadelphia.

230 : 1355. *with blood had besprinkled its portals.* See Exodus 12:22, and explain the allusion in this and the next line.

231 : 1381 and 1390. *Still stands the forest primeval.* Compare this with the parallel passage *This is the forest primeval* in lines 1 and 7 of the Prelude. What is the purpose of this repetition and parallelism?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why did Evangeline finally land in Philadelphia? (2) What new aspiration now filled her soul? Quote a line which sums up her new view of life. (3) Tell how she employed her time and what effect her presence had on others. (4) What is the value of the pestilence in the story? (5) Why do you suppose Gabriel came to such poverty in his old age? (6) Why is the Sabbath chosen for the final scene? What was Evangeline's mood? (7) What words did Evangeline utter when she recognized Gabriel? How had the poet prepared us for these words (see line 1046)? (8) For what do you think Evangeline was so thankful (line 1380)? Was her life a failure? (9) What is the chief function of the Postlude, or Epilogue, lines 1381–1399? (10) What repetitions from the Prelude are found here? Is it artistic for a poem to return in the last lines to the point of departure? Why? (11) Give in a very few words your honest opinion of the poem as a whole. (12) If the yellow-fever epidemic of 1793 (see note on line 1298) is the closing year of the action of the poem, how many years have transpired since the opening of the story? Make an estimate of Evangeline's age at the various stages and thus work out a complete time action of the story.

A Psalm of Life (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

This famous poem was written on July 26, 1838, and first appeared anonymously in the *Knickerbocker Magazine* in October of the same year. It at once attracted wide attention. Whittier reviewed it enthusiastically in *The Freeman*, of which he was editor at this time, saying, "It is very seldom that we find an article of poetry as full of excellent philosophy and common sense. . . . These nine simple verses are worth more than all the dreams of Shelley, and Keats, and Wordsworth. They are alive and vigorous with the spirit of the day in which we live—the moral steam enginery of an age of action." Literary critics smile to-day at this injudicious and extravagant outburst of the good Quaker poet's, but it was the sincere expression of his heart, and his judgment has been confirmed by thousands who have read, committed to memory, and found comfort in Longfellow's solemn yet optimistic moralizing. It is the poet's expression of the struggles of his own heart in a period of depression—that eternal struggle which goes on between the conflicting moods of despondency and joy in human life.

EXPLANATORY:

232. *young man . . . psalmist.* The subtitle explains the situation. Notice that it is the *heart* of the young man, that is, the better, more hopeful, more joyous nature speaking against the pessimistic, hopeless philosophy of the psalmist, or poet, in a moment of despondency. Longfellow in different moods is both the young man and the psalmist.

232 : 1. *mournful numbers.* That is, melancholy or hopeless poetry. *Numbers* is frequently used to signify metrical composition. Compare Pope's line,

> I lispt in numbers, for the numbers came.

232 : 7. *Dust thou art.* See Genesis 3 : 19.

232 : 13. *Art is long.* This has been traced back to Hippocrates, the ancient Greek physician. The thought recurs in many poems in modern literature.

232 : 18. *bivouac.* A temporary camping-place.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Give the story of the origin of the poem, and show exactly what the poet meant to express by it. (2) Why is this, then, a purely lyric poem? (3) What is its mood, and in what movement and tone of voice should it be read? (4) Paraphrase the thought of the first stanza. (5) What great doctrine is expressed in the second stanza? (6) What is the pivotal word in the third stanza? In what two other stanzas is this word or idea repeated? Is it, then, the key to the whole poem? (7) Expound the metaphors in the fourth and fifth stanzas. (8) According to the sixth stanza, what is the only time we are sure of? (9) Do you admire the extended figure in stanzas 8 and 9? Why? (10) Select what you think is the best single stanza in the poem. (11) In what meter is the poem written? Notice that the trochaic rhythm requires feminine rimes, such as *numbers — slumbers*, but in the second and fourth lines of each stanza the final unaccented syllable is omitted, so that we have one feminine and one masculine rime in each stanza. Is this rime scheme adhered to throughout the poem? (12) How many syllables does the rhythm require in the words *real*, *funeral*, *bivouac?* (13) In line 4 would the rhythm require the emphasis to fall on *are* or on *not?* Does the rhythm, then, help you to give the correct rhetorical or thought stress? (14) Memorize the poem perfectly, and recite it.

Hymn to the Night (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Longfellow said that he wrote the poem when sitting at his chamber window on a balmy night."—Bronson, *American Poems*, p. 576. Poe made an elaborate analysis of the "Hymn to the Night" in a review of *Voices of the Night* in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, February, 1840. Among other things he said, "No poem ever opened with a beauty more august. The five first stanzas are nearly perfect—by which we mean that they are nearly free from fault, while embodying a supreme excellence. Had we seen nothing from the pen of the poet but these five verses, we should have formed the most exaggerated conception of his powers." The poem first appeared in *Voices of the Night* (1839), giving the cue for the title of that volume.

EXPLANATORY:

233 : 3. *sable.* Black; from the sable, or marten, whose fur is black.

234 : 21. *Orestes-like.* Orestes was pursued by the Furies because he had killed his own mother. Look up the story in a classic mythology.

234 : 22. *Descend*, etc. "It is not every reader who will here understand the poet is invoking Peace to descend *through*, or by means of 'The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair, the best-beloved Night.' "—Poe, in his review of *Voices of the Night*.

234 : 23. *The welcome, the thrice-prayed for.* This is a translation of the Greek words used as a headpiece or motto.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Give the lyric impulse of this poem. (2) In what form does the poet conceive of night? Is the personification maintained throughout the poem? (3) What was the effect of the presence of night on the poet (stanzas 3 and 4)? (4) What lessons did he draw? (5) What appropriateness do you find in the allusion to Orestes? (6) Comment on Poe's interpretation of the last stanza (see note on line 22). Do you accept this interpretation? Why? (7) Compare this poem with "A Psalm of Life." Which of the two do you think is more beautiful? More inspiring? More artistic in expression? (8) How is the theme of the poem emphasized by the rimes in the first three stanzas? (9) Characterize the rhythm and the melody, or tone-color, of the poem.

Maidenhood (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

On the publication of *Ballads and Other Poems*, Longfellow wrote to his father saying, among other things, "I think the last two pieces the best,—perhaps as good as anything I have written." These two pieces were "Maidenhood" and "Excelsior."

EXPLANATORY:

235 : 18. *Elysian.* Relating to the Greek "Heaven," or place of the departed spirits of the heroes.

235 : 21. *falcon's shadow.* The falcon was a hawk trained to catch birds for hunters.

235 : 34. *Gather, then, each flower that grows.* Compare Robert Herrick's

> Gather ye rosebuds while ye may.

235 : 36. *embalm.* Perfume, sweeten.

235 : 37. *lily.* Emblem of purity.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) The thought movement of the poem may be summarized thus: (*a*) the picture of maidenhood (stanzas 1–5); (*b*) the query (stanzas 6–8); (*c*) warning and advice (stanzas 9–16). Give the details brought out in the poem under each of these suggested divisions. (2) What metaphor is developed in lines 7–15? Why is it a good one? (3) Expound the metaphor in lines 31–36. Exactly what does the "tent of snows" mean? (4) Interpret literally the thought of lines 37–39. (5) Select the one stanza in the poem which you admire most.

Excelsior (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

Late one night Longfellow's eye fell upon a scrap of a New York newspaper with an engraving of the state seal on it—a shield, with a rising sun in the center and the Latin motto *Excelsior* underneath it. The picture of the youth in the Alps, climbing higher and ever higher and bearing this motto *Excelsior* upon a pennant, flashed into his mind, and he at once wrote the first draft of the poem on the back of an old letter. He dated the composition at the end as follows: "September 28, 1841. Half past 3 o'clock morning. Now to bed." In a letter written later to C. K. Tuckerman, Longfellow gives a full analysis of the piece. He said his purpose was "to display, in a series of pictures, the life of a man of genius, resisting all temptations, laying aside all fears, heedless of all warnings, and pressing right on to accomplish his purpose. His motto is *Excelsior*, 'higher.' He passes through the Alpine village — through the rough, cold paths of the world — where the peasants cannot understand him, and where the watchword is an 'unknown tongue.' He disregards the happiness of domestic peace and sees the glaciers — his fate — before him. He disregards the warning of the old man's wisdom and the fascinations of woman's love. He answers to all 'Higher yet!' The monks of St. Bernard are the representatives of religious forms and ceremonies, and with their oft-repeated prayer mingles the sound of his voice, telling them there is something higher than forms and ceremonies. Filled with these aspirations, he perishes; without having reached the perfection he longed for; and the voice heard in the air is the promise of immortality and progress ever upward."

EXPLANATORY:

237 : 32. *Saint Bernard.* He founded the Bernardine order of Cistercian monks at Clairvaux in the Alps during the twelfth century. Note the reference to the famous St. Bernard dogs in line 36 below.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Read carefully the introductory note and make a complete outline of the poem by stanzas. (2) What effect has the constant repetition of the motto? (3) Which one of the voices was most appealing to the youth? Upon what grounds do you base your decision? (4) How do the warnings in the fourth and sixth stanzas prepare us for the catastrophe? (5) What voice speaks last, and what is the real import of this voice? (6) Compare the poem with Poe's "Eldorado." Which of the two poems best expresses the idea of the unattainable ideal? (7) Memorize "Excelsior."

The Wreck of the Hesperus (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

Longfellow was constantly on the lookout for themes suitable to his own poetic genius. In his *Journal* he recorded suggestions as they came to him from his reading, conversation, and other sources. On December 17, 1839, he recorded the following note: "News of shipwrecks horrible on the coast. Twenty bodies washed ashore near Gloucester, one lashed to a piece of wreck. There is a reef called Norman's Woe where many of these took place; among others the schooner Hesperus. Also the Sea-flower on Black Rock. I must write a ballad upon this." About twelve days later he was sitting up rather late at night writing a review of Allston's poems, when suddenly the idea came to him to write the ballad. He worked rapidly on it and then went to bed, but he could not sleep, because he kept thinking of new stanzas to add to the ballad. He arose and completed the poem about three o'clock in the morning, and then went to bed and slept soundly. The next morning he recorded this experience in his *Journal*, saying that the poem hardly cost him an effort, as it came to him in whole stanzas rather than in single lines. The ballad was first published in the *New World*, January, 1840.

EXPLANATORY:

238 : 11. *flaw.* A sudden puff of wind.

238 : 14. *Spanish Main.* That part of the Caribbean Sea along the northern coast of South America, so called during the early colonization periods when the richly laden Spanish merchantmen plied between the Old World and the New. This sea was infested with pirates, and many tales of sunken ships and buried treasures have been told of these stirring times and this romantic region.

239 : 56. *Lake of Galilee.* Relate the incident referred to; see Matthew 8:23–27.

240 : 60. *Norman's Woe.* A dangerous reef off Gloucester harbor in Massachusetts.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Relate the story in your own words. (2) What wrenched accents peculiar to ballad measures do you note in lines 3, 4, 13, 29? (3) What characteristic ballad parallelism and repetition do you find in lines 37–48? Point out other examples. (4) What is the characteristic ballad measure here used? Point out some peculiarities, such as extra syllables (lines 3, 7, etc.), omission of words (line 14), pleonasm (lines 9, 19), stock expressions (line 13), and the like. (5) Of course "The Wreck of the Hesperus" is a literary or imitative ballad, and as such, good as it is of its kind, it pales into almost complete eclipse when brought into direct comparison with some of the fine old English and Scottish popular ballads. Take the following, for example, and make a close comparison of it with Longfellow's literary ballad:

SIR PATRICK SPENCE

1. The King sits in Dumferling toune,
   Drinking the blude-reid wine;
O whar will I get guid sailòr,
   To sail this schip of mine?

2. Up and spak an eldern Knicht
   Sat at the king's richt knee:
Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailòr
   That sails upon the se

3. The king has written a braid letter,
And signd it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,
Was walking on the sand.

4. The first line that Sir Patrick red,
A loud lauch lauchèd he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red,
The teir blinded his ee.

5. 'O wha is this has done this deid,
This ill deid done to me,
To send me out this time o' the yeir,
To sail upon the se!'

6. 'Mak hast', mak hast', my mirry men all,
Our guid schip sails the morne.'
'O say na sae, my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storme.

7. 'Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone,
Wi' the auld moone in her arme,
And I feir, I feir, my deir mastèr,
That we will cum to harme.'

8. Our Scots nobles wer richt laith
To weet their cork-heild shoon,
Bot lang or a' the play wer playd,
Thair hats they swam aboone.

9. O lang, lang may thair ladies sit,
Wi' thair fans into their hand,
Or e'ir they sae Sir Patrick Spence
Cum sailing to the land.

10. O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
Wi' their gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,
For they'll se them na mair.

11. Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,
It's fiftie fadom deip,
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence
Wi' the Scots lords at his feit.

The Arrow and the Song (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

On November 16, 1845, Longfellow made this note in his *Journal:* "Before church, wrote 'The Arrow and the Song,' which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire, and glanced on to the paper with arrowy speed. Literally an improvisation." It was included in *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*, which was published about a month later.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How is unity of effect obtained in this brief but almost perfect lyric? (2) Give the sequence of the thought by stanzas. (3) Work out the parallelism of expression in the first and second stanzas. What is the purpose of this? (4) How do Longfellow's own songs fulfill the condition set forth in the last two lines? (5) How do you like this simple stanzaic form? (6) Point out one break in the regularity of the rhythm. Is this a blemish? Why? (7) Is *unbroke* in the last stanza correct? Why is it permissible to use such a form here?

Divina Commedia (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is the first of the six sonnets, two to each of the three parts, which Longfellow attached to his monumental translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia.* It is in this sonnet that the poet refers most touchingly to the burden of the loss of his wife and to the additional distress which he felt as the terrible Civil War drew to a close. The sonnet was written in April, 1864.

EXPLANATORY:

241 : 5. *paternoster.* The Lord's prayer.

241 : 9. *here.* That is, he enters upon the work of his translation of Dante.

241 : 10. *leave my burden at the minster gate.* His burden was the grief over the loss of his wife. *Minster* is an old word for monastery or cathedral.

241 : 12. *tumult of the time.* The Civil War (1861–1865).

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Note how the thought of the ordinary worshiper is developed in the octave, or first eight lines, and how the application to his own life's burden is made in the sestet, or last six lines. Summarize each of these divisions in your own words. (2) Read the poem aloud for its melody and sonorousness. Select the most musical lines.

The Birds of Killingworth (Longfellow)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is the poet's first tale, being the last number in the first series of *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, published in 1863. Most of these tales in verse are based on well-known originals, but this one is Longfellow's own invention. It is elaborated from the following note made by Henry Hull in writing of an old custom that he recalled as once practiced in the town of Killingworth, Middlesex County, Connecticut: "The men of the northern part of the town did early in the spring choose two leaders, and then the two sides were formed; the side that got beaten should pay the bills. Their special game was the hawk, the owl, the crow, the blackbird, and any other bird supposed to be mischievous to the corn. Some years each side would bring them in by the bushel. This was followed up for only a few years, for the birds began to grow scarce." Naturally from the poet's point of view it would not be appropriate to make very much of the shooting contest as a source of interest, so he has constructed a tale with very little action, but one full of somewhat humorous and satirical characterization of different types of New England life. The underlying lesson of kindness to the birds and the slight thread of romance between the Preceptor and Almira were more attractive to our poet than was the murderous contest in the slaying of the innocent birds. Next to "Paul Revere's Ride" this is perhaps the best known of all the *Tales of a Wayside Inn.*

EXPLANATORY:

242 : 2. *merle and mavis.* The European blackbird and the throstle or song thrush. Longfellow frequently borrows his diction from the English poets.

242 : 4. *Saxon Cædmon.* The first of the Anglo-Saxon poets whose name we know. He paraphrased Genesis and other parts of the Bible, though scholars now think that the paraphrases that have come down to us are by later singers. To whom does the Saxon poet refer in the phrase "Blithe-heart King"?

242 : 11–12. *The sparrows . . . in Holy writ.* Explain the allusion. See Matthew 10:29–31.

242 : 15. *the raven's cry.* Look up Luke 12:24 for this allusion. Locate also the biblical quotation in the next line.

242 : 17. *birds of passage.* Just what does this phrase mean? What Sound is referred to in this line?

242 : 25. *jocund.* Joyous, happy.

242 : 25. *Killingworth.* Locate the town. The name is doubtless a variant of the English Kenilworth. By a curious coincidence the changed form of the name suggests the theme of the poem, the *killing* of the birds.

242 : 30. *Cassandra-like.* Cassandra was a prophetess, the daughter of King Priam of Troy. Explain *prognosticating.*

243 : 39. *skeleton . . . at their feast.* An allusion to the old Egyptian custom of having a skull or skeleton at banquets to warn the guests of the constant presence of death in the midst of life. Note the humor of the allusion here.

243 : 52. *Edwards on the will.* Explain the allusion.

244 : 67. *sable bombazine.* A black woolen cloth formerly much used for mourning garments.

244 : 89. *Plato.* An ancient Greek philosopher, author of *The Republic*, presenting an ideal state from which poets were excluded as being a useless class. Do you think poets are a useless class of citizens? *Reviewers* in this same line is a reference to the contributors to the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews* who so severely criticized the English romantic poets of the early nineteenth century.

244 : 93. *Troubadours.* Lyric poets of Southern France during the Middle Ages; hence any singer of romantic love.

244 : 96. *as David did for Saul.* Explain the allusion. See I Samuel 16. Can you name a poem by Browning which treats of this Bible story?

245 : 103. *linnet.* A European song bird.

246 : 143. *fieldfares.* The European thrush.

246 : 147. *cornfields.* The fields of wheat. Longfellow follows the European usage of *corn* in the sense of wheat or other small grain instead of the Indian corn or maize of American usage.

247 : 184. *The very St. Bartholomew of Birds.* The reference is to the slaying of the Protestants of France in 1572. Charles IX issued an order that on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, every Protestant in France should be killed. He declared that there must not be a single Protestant left alive to reproach him.

248 : 193–194. *Herod . . . Herod.* The first reference is to Herod Agrippa, who was "eaten of worms" (see Acts 12 : 23); the second is to Herod the Great, tetrarch of Judea at the time of the birth of Christ. In an effort to destroy the child Jesus (see Matthew 2 : 16), he ordered all the infants or "Innocents" to be slain. Longfellow has here confused the two Herods, or rather he has combined the two into one to gain a strong comparison.

248 : 211. *tongues of flame.* The coming of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples of Christ at Pentecost is described in Acts 2 : 3 as "cloven tongues like as of fire."

248 : 212. *illumined pages of his Doom's-Day book.* The old manuscripts were frequently illuminated or decorated with brightly colored initial letters. The richly colored autumn leaves are compared with these illuminated letters in the old "Doom's-Day" book as prepared by William the Conqueror and others.

249 : 229. *canticles.* Psalms or other portions of the Scriptures used as chants in religious services.

249 : 239. *a new heaven and a new earth.* The phrase is adapted from the apocalyptic vision of St. John in Revelation 21 : 1.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) At what time of the year and how long ago is the setting of the story laid? What induced the poet to choose this time of the year? (2) Just what is meant by "Those lovely lyrics written by . . . Blithe-heart King" (line 3)? (3) Explain the figurative ideas in the third stanza. (4) Upon what grounds did the farmers decide to kill the birds? (5) From what kind of home did the Squire appear? Is there any suggestion of satire or sarcasm in the description of the Squire as he sallies forth from his mansion to the town meeting? (6) How is the real character of the Parson intimated? (7) What impression does the picture of the teacher, or Preceptor, make on you? Why is Almira mentioned in this connection? (8) Is the Deacon distinctly delineated? What sort of impression does he make on you? (9) What moved the Preceptor to speak out in the town meeting? (10) Give the general drift of his argument. What effect did all this have on the farmers? (11) Describe what followed the town meeting. (12) Read the stanza describing the coming of autumn (lines 209 ff.). (13) Explain the figures of speech contained in this stanza. (14) At the coming of the next spring, how did the citizens show their sorrow for what they had done? (15) Do you think the marriage of the Preceptor and Almira is a fitting conclusion for the story? (16) What lesson do you learn from the poem?

Snow-Bound (Whittier)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Snow-Bound," one of the most perfect rural idyls in the language, was first conceived by Whittier about August, 1865, just after the final settling of that terrible question of slavery, in which he had taken such an active part through his writings. Whittier was then fifty-nine years old, and had reached that period in life when the instinct for reminiscence is strongest. A few years before, his mother and elder sister had died, and just a year before, his younger sister, Elizabeth, had passed away, and the poem is a sort of memorial to them and to the household of which they were a part, and of which now only the poet and his brother Matthew survived. The poem first appeared in a separate volume in 1866, under the management of James T. Field, the poet's literary adviser and publisher. Whittier explained in a note preceding the poem who the various members of the household were, and added this account of his resources: "In my boyhood, in our lonely farm house, we had scanty sources of information; few books and only a small weekly paper. Our only annual was the Almanac. Under such circumstances story-telling was a necessary resource in the long winter evenings. My father when a young man had traversed the wilderness to Canada, and could tell of his adventures with Indians and wild beasts, and of his sojourn in the French villages. My uncle was ready with his record of hunting and fishing and, it must be confessed, with stories, which he at least half believed, of witchcraft and apparitions. My mother, who was born in the Indian-haunted region of Somersworth, New Hampshire, between Dover and Portsmouth, told us of the inroads of the savages, and the narrow escape of her ancestors. She described strange people who lived on the Piscataqua and Cocheco, among whom was Bantam the sorcerer. I have in my possession the wizard's 'conjuring book,' which he solemnly opened when consulted. It is a copy of Cornelius Agrippa's *Magic*, printed in 1651." Prof. George R. Carpenter in his life of Whittier says, "He, this old man who had been an East Haverhill boy, describes *his* homestead, *his* well curb, *his* brook, *his* family circle, *his* schoolmaster, apparently intent on naught but the complete accuracy of his narrative, and lo! such is his art that he has drawn the one perfect, imperishable picture of that bright old winter life in that strange clime. Diaries, journals, histories, biographies, and autobiographies, with the same aim in view, are not all together so typical as this unique poem of less than a thousand lines."

EXPLANATORY:

250. Whittier dedicated the poem "To the memory of the household it describes."

250. *Cor. Agrippa, Occult Philosophy.* See Whittier's reference to this old book in the introductory note.

250 : 1. *brief.* The shortest day in the year occurs when?

250 : 7. *portent.* A sign or omen. It is still superstitiously believed that if the sun sinks behind a cloud, a storm will follow.

250 : 13. *sharpened.* What effect would the cold have on the face? Is the adjective suggestive?

250 : 15. *east.* That is, from the east.

251 : 17. *felt the strong pulse.* The Whittier home was only about fifteen miles from the shore. Note the metaphor and personification in the line.

251 : 22. *herd's-grass.* Timothy hay.

251 : 25. *stanchion.* Upright poles with hickory or walnut bows attached so as to hold the cattle in the stalls.

251 : 44. *Nature's geometric signs.* That is, in regular crystals like geometric figures. Look up illustrations of snow crystals and see how aptly *starry flake*, *pellicle*, etc., apply.

252 : 62. *well-curb.* When some western school girls who could not understand how a well with a sweep could have a roof wrote to Whittier for an explanation, he replied that there was a board laid across the curb as a shelf to hold the pail, and the snow made this look like a Chinese roof.

252 : 65. *Pisa's leaning miracle.* A tower made of pure white marble in Pisa, Italy. Its base is 51 feet, and the tower is said to lean about 16 feet from its vertical line of 181 feet. It is called a miracle because it does not fall, but from a scientific point of view it is perfectly safe. Why?

252 : 70. *buskins.* Formerly high-heeled boots worn by tragic actors, but here simply heavy, high-topped shoes.

252 : 77. *Aladdin's wondrous cave.* Let some one briefly tell the story of Aladdin.

252 : 80. *supernal.* Heavenly, from above; compare *infernal.*

253 : 90. *Egypt's Amun.* An Egyptian god, frequently represented with a ram's head. Also spelled Ammon.

253 : 97. *No church-bell.* This seems to indicate that the third day of the storm was Sunday. There could be no meeting on such a day.

254 : 136. *crane and pendent trammels.* The crane was a swinging bar of iron put on the side of the fireplace, and the trammels were hooks on which cooking utensils were hung. What does *pendent* mean?

254 : 137. *Turks' heads.* The smooth tops of the andirons were imitations of the Turkish fez.

254 : 142. *witches . . . tea.* "When you see the fire on the hearth reflected outside, the witches are making their tea. It is dangerous to go out of doors then, and to stand in the reflection of the fire will bewitch you." Daniels and Stephens, *Encyclopedia of Superstitions.*

255 : 156. *clean-winged.* Swept clean, as with a turkey-wing duster.

255 : 183. *brother.* His younger brother, Matthew, died 1883, nine years before the poet's death.

256 : 204. *The stars shine through his cypress-trees.* The star is the emblem of hope; the cypress, of death and mourning. Explain the metaphor.

256 : 206–207. *breaking day . . . mournful marbles.* The resurrection day breaking over the marble gravestones.

256 : 211. *And Love can never lose its own.* Compare Tennyson's

'T is better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.

256 : 215. "*The Chief of Gambia's golden shore.*" The third stanza of Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton's poem "The African Chief" begins "A chief of Gambia's golden shore." Gambia is a district in West Africa from which slaves were taken. The lines quoted by Whittier below (lines 220–223) form the fourth stanza of Mrs. Morton's poem. The poet may have learned the piece from Bingham's *American Preceptor* (1813), where it appeared among other selections for declamation. In later editions of "Snow-Bound" Whittier substituted for the lines referring to Dame Mercy Warren the following:

As if a far-blown trumpet stirred
The languorous sin-sick air, I heard:

257 : 225. *Memphremagog.* A lake on the border between Vermont and Canada. St. François (line 229) is a river in Quebec; Salisbury (line 237) is in northeastern Massachusetts; Boar's Head (line 242) and the Isles of Shoals (line 243) are along the New Hampshire coast just north of Salisbury.

257 : 226. *moose and samp.* Moose meat and a sort of porridge made of Indian corn.

257 : 231. *Norman cap and bodiced zone.* The dress of the Canadian settlers who came from Normandy, France. See *Evangeline*, lines 39–40.

257 : 244. *hake-broil.* Hake is a kind of salt-water fish.

258 : 259. *Cochecho.* Indian name for Dover, New Hampshire. It is near the Piscataqua River.

258 : 270. *gray wizard's conjuring-book.* See the introductory note with quotation from Whittier.

258 : 274. *Piscataqua.* A river in Maine. Pronounced pĭs-căt'*ȧ*-kwā here. Why?

258 : 286. *painful Sewell's ancient tome.* The ancient volume of painstaking Sewell, the author of a history of the Quakers.

258 : 289. *Chalkley's Journal.* Thomas Chalkley was a traveling Quaker preacher. The story repeated in the text is substantially the same as that related in the *Journal.*

259 : 305. *tangled ram*, etc. Relate the story as told in Genesis 22

259 : 307. *innocent.* Lacking in knowledge. The uncle was Moses Whittier, an old bachelor.

259 : 310. *lyceum.* Originally a grove in which Aristotle taught; hence any school or instructive course of lectures. Properly accented on the second syllable, but here on the first to meet the requirements of the rhythm. Scan the line.

259 : 313. *divine.* Find out, predict.

259 : 315. *cunning-warded.* A ward is a notch on a key to allow it to pass an obstruction in the lock; hence *cunning-warded* here means cunningly or nicely adjusted, or well fitted to unlock the mysteries of nature.

259 : 320. *Apollonius.* A Greek philosopher of the first century who was said to know all languages by instinct, even those of animals and birds.

259 : 322. *Hermes.* The Egyptian god Thoth, whom the Greeks called *Hermes Trismegistus*, the god of all wisdom. He is usually represented in figures as having the bill of an ibis, the sacred bird of the Egyptians, "the sage cranes of Nilus" referred to in line 323 of the text.

260 : 332. *White of Selborne.* Gilbert White, an Englishman who recorded so faithfully "The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne" that his book has become a classic in English literature.

260 : 350. *the dear aunt.* Mercy Hussey, sister of Mrs. Whittier.

261 : 361. *huskings.* Read Whittier's "The Huskers" with the "Corn Song" which follows.

261 : 369. *mirage.* An illusion; pronounced mir äzh′, though Whittier probably called it mir′age to fit the rhythm. In Pickard's life of Whittier the story is told that late one night the young girl saw an image of her lover on horseback approaching the home. When she opened the door, nothing was there. Shortly afterwards she heard that her lover had died in New York at exactly the same hour as that in which she had seen the apparition. This is evidently the "mirage that loomed across her way."

261 : 378. *elder sister.* Mary, who afterward married Jacob Caldwell of Haverhill. She died in 1860.

262 : 396. *Our youngest.* Elizabeth; she never married, but lived with her brother and devoted herself to his interests until her death in 1864. Like him she had a poetical gift, and several of her poems have been preserved. The tribute the poet makes to her is perhaps the finest piece of poetry he ever composed.

263 : 438. *Brisk wielder of the birch and rule.* The teacher's name was George Haskell.

263 : 444. *mitten-blinded.* That is, he blinded the cat by drawing a mitten over its head.

263 : 447. *Dartmouth's college halls.* Located at Hanover, New Hampshire.

264 : 476. *Pindus-born Araxes.* The Arachthus (Araxes) River rises in the Pindus Mountains in Greece.

264 : 483. *hostage . . . took.* That is, his knowledge of the past gave him an advantage in discerning the trend of future events.

265 : 510. *Another guest.* Harriet Livermore, of New Hampshire. She was a brilliant woman, but eccentric and quick-tempered. She believed that the time of the second coming of Christ to the earth was at hand, and so she went to Asia and lived for a while on Mount Lebanon with another religious enthusiast, Lady Hester Stanhope, referred to in line 555 as the "crazy Queen of Lebanon."

265 : 523. *pard-like.* Leopard-like; *pard* is used only in poetry.

266 : 536. *Petruchio's Kate.* Petruchio was the man who tamed Katherine, the high-tempered heroine of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew.*

266 : 537. *Siena's saint.* Saint Catherine of Siena, Italy, noted for her mildness and charity. She made a vow of silence for three years. Note how the two contrasted Catherines are combined in Miss Livermore.

266 : 555. *crazy Queen of Lebanon.* See note on line 510.

266 : 568. *fatal sisters.* The three fates, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos.

269 : 656. *Eden.* Consult Genesis 2 and 3.

269 : 659. *wise old Doctor.* Dr. Elias Weld of Rocks Village near East Haverhill.

269 : 668. *inward light.* The conscience. The Quaker matron, Mrs. Abigail Whittier, professed to follow the inward light, while Dr. Weld, a Presbyterian or Calvinist, subscribed to a stricter creed. Note the metaphor in *mail.*

270 : 683. *Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse.* Thomas Ellwood, a Quaker poet, wrote a long epic on King David. Ellwood's muse Whittier humorously calls a stranger to the nine Greek or classic Muses, and he dubs it "drab-skirted" in humorous allusion to the plain gray garb of the Quakers.

270 : 693. *painted Creeks.* The Creek Indians later were removed from Georgia to the Indian Territory.

270 : 694. *daft McGregor.* Sir George McGregor, a Scotchman, attempted to form a colony in Porto Rico in 1822. This allusion and the one preceding give us a hint of the exact time Whittier had in mind for his reminiscent picture. He would himself have been about fifteen at this time.

270 : 696. *Taygetos*, etc. A mountain range in Greece; the Greek patriot Ypsilanti led his soldiers, who came from the district of Maina, against the Turks in the struggle for Greek independence.

270 : 700. *Its corner for the rustic Muse.* Whittier's first published poem appeared in just such a poet's corner.

271 : 715. *Angel of the backward look.* Memory.

271 : 719. *weird palimpsest.* Strange parchment, which could be written on after the previous writing had been erased. How does the figure apply?

271 : 727. *mournful cypresses.* Why mournful? See line 204 and the note on it.

271 : 728. *amaranths.* A flower supposed never to fade; symbolic of immortality.

271 : 730. *restless sands.* In the hour-glass of time.

271 : 739. *century's aloe.* The American aloe, or century plant, a large spear-leafed shrub of the southwestern United States and Mexico. It was formerly supposed to flower only once in a century. Whittier here refers to the close of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, the last being the finest achievement of the first century of American history.

271 : 741. *Truce of God.* An agreement of the eleventh century forbidding all fighting for a time so that the laborers could till the fields.

272 : 747. *Flemish pictures.* The Flemish school of painters was noted for brilliant coloring and sympathetic treatment of humble interiors.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

General. (1) Why is this poem called an idyl? What is the general nature of the theme and material introduced? (2) In what mood and from what point of view is the material treated? Notice how the poet indicates the change of point of view in the reflective passages (lines 179, 386, 400, 485) and in the conclusion (line 715). Note also how at the end of these reflective passages the reader is distinctly brought back to the original point of view. (3) Is the poem narrative or lyric in its general effect? Explain. (4) Divide the poem into four large sections showing the general structure of the whole composition, and give an appropriate title for each division. (Hint: Keep the central idea, namely *snow-bound*, in mind, and note how we have before, during, and after sections, with a conclusion. Lines 116, 629, 715 are good dividing points.) (5) Now take these larger divisions and fill in the details so as to make a complete outline of about one full page. You will notice that at various points the poet interjects his own reflections on suggested topics, such as his thoughts on time and immortality (lines 179–211), vision of a lost loved one and thoughts on death (lines 400–437), education (lines 485–509), judging others (lines 565–589). These grow naturally out of the subject-matter and should be duly recorded in the outline. (6) Work out a complete time scheme for the poem, beginning on a Friday morning late in December and running over to the next Friday. Consult lines 1, 32, 42, 47, 116, 629, 674. Be careful to determine whether lines 42 and 47 indicate the same or separate mornings. (7) In which is the poet more interested, the incidents or the characters? (8) How does he blend the setting, the characters, and the movement or action of the piece so as to give unity of effect? (9) What is the prevailing or dominant tone of the composition? (10) Why do you think the poet was able to draw such accurate portraits of the characters? Compare these with purely imaginary characters, like those in Longfellow's *Evangeline*, for example. (11) In what meter is the poem written? Scan lines 19 to 30, noting inversions, hovering or divided stresses, slurred or extra syllables, and the like. (12) The usual couplet rime is sometimes varied into alternate or inclosed rimes. Point out some of these. (13) Do you note many wrenched or slightly untrue rimes, such as *pellicle — fell*, lines 45–46; *dumb — lyceum*, lines 309–310; *on — sun*, lines, 41–42; *intense — elements*, lines 100–101? How would *hearth*, line 106, be pronounced? *Piscataqua*, line 272? *memories*, line 360? Are these blemishes, or merely licenses? (14) Suggested memory passages: lines 155–174; 203–211; 394–437; 485–509; 647–656; 715–728. (15) Suggested subjects for compositions: The Inmates of Whittier's Early Home; A Contrast of "Snow-Bound" with Burns's "The Cotter's Saturday Night," or Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village"; Figures of Speech in "Snow-Bound"; Whittier's Power as a Portrayer of Characters; The Chief Values Derived from Studying "Snow-Bound"; A Winter Day in My Own Home.

Specific. (1) What peculiar weather signs are given as presaging a storm? Can you give similar local weather signs? (2) Summarize the "nightly chores," and compare them with your own. (3) Explain the implied metaphor in lines 29–30. Is it humorous in effect? (4) Compare lines 33–40 with the stanza from Emerson's "The Snow-Storm," which Whittier quotes at the head of "Snow-Bound." (5) Describe some of the transformed objects around the home (lines 54–65), explaining some of the allusions. (6) To what place and why was it necessary to dig a path? (7) Describe the appearance and action of the animals after the storm. (8) Compare Whittier's brief description of the frozen brook (lines 110–115) with Lowell's extended description in the first Prelude of "The Vision of Sir Launfal." (9) What effect has the evening fire on the scene? (10) Describe the picture around the hearth (lines 155–174). (11) Enumerate the evening entertainments (lines 211–215). (12) Do you suppose the father and mother told all of their experiences in one evening, or is the poet here condensing the narratives of many days into one? This is called the poet's power of universal compression or condensation. Compare Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" for similar condensation. (13) Refer to the notes and explain the allusions in the father's and the mother's recital. (14) Give an oral sketch of Uncle Moses Whittier. Do you think he was a good story-teller? (15) What aunt is referred to? Explain the reference in line 369. (16) Compare the metaphor in lines 390–391 with Shakespeare's "That undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns." (17) Explain just what the poet meant in lines 392–394. Why does the memory of the younger sister call forth such tender reveries from the poet? (18) Why are the birch and rule mentioned in line 438? (19) Compare this schoolmaster with the one in Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village." Which portrait do you prefer? (20) Tell the story of the other guest (lines 510 ff.). (21) What does the poet describe after he finishes with the portraits? (22) Read aloud the description of sleep (lines 622–628) and comment on the happy way in which the poet suggests by his language the very thing he is describing. (23) On the morning of the fourth day (line 629) what distinct change takes place in the situation of the snow-bound household? (24) Visualize the picture described in lines 650–656, and explain just what is meant by "the charm which Eden never lost." (25) What is meant by the "Quaker matron's inward light" and the Doctor's "mail of Calvin's creed"? (26) Explain the metaphor in lines 672–673. (27) How did the family spend the later days of their enforced imprisonment? (28) What do the allusions in the village paper help us to determine? See the notes above. (29) Read and expound the magnificent apostrophe to memory beginning with line 715 and forming the conclusion to this reminiscent idyl. (30) What event is referred to in line 739? (31) How does the poet appeal to his old friends (line 745) and how does he express his gratitude to his new friends, the readers whom he has never seen? Is this a happy concluding thought?

Ichabod (Whittier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This famous poem was first published at Washington City on May 2, 1850, in the *National Era*, an anti-slavery organ of which Whittier was an assistant or corresponding editor. Daniel Webster, the distinguished Massachusetts senator, had been regarded as the leader of the doctrine of unionism as opposed to states' rights; but when the Fugitive Slave Law was proposed, Webster took a conservative and conciliatory attitude and supported the measure, thus drawing upon himself a storm of protest from the anti-slavery party of the North. Whittier voiced his own and his party's feelings in this remarkable poem. In an introductory note written later, he declared that when he read the speech in which Webster supported Clay's compromise measure and saw clearly the sure results which would follow, he uttered his rebuke more in sorrow than in anger. Later in his life, feeling that he owed some reparation to the great statesman whose action he had so signally rebuked, and feeling also, as Professor Carpenter suggests, that perhaps Webster was right after all, Whittier wrote "The Lost Occasion," in which he gave a fine portrait of Webster and expressed a profound regret that the great man had not lived to become a leader for liberty and union in the final struggle between the states. Professor Carpenter remarks that the verses are, in their awful scorn, the most powerful that Whittier ever wrote, and Francis H. Underwood in speaking of "Ichabod" in his *Life of Whittier*, says, "It contains more storage of electric energy than anything we remember in our time."

EXPLANATORY:

272. *Ichabod.* The meaning of the Hebrew name is "the glory has departed." See I Samuel 4:21.

272 : 3. *gray hairs.* Webster was then sixty-eight years old, and two years later he died, October 24, 1852.

273 : 35. *Walk backward*, etc. This is a veiled allusion to the incident recorded in Genesis 9:21–27, a part of which reads: "Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Recall the historical occasion which produced this poem. (Look up Clay's Compromise Bill of 1850 and ascertain Webster's part in it.) (2) Explain the meaning of the title of the poem. (3) Whittier says that scorn and wrath with attendant revilings and insults are out of place in contemplating Webster's action. What emotion is it, then, that he feels and expresses in the poem? (4) Do you think there is after all a sort of suppressed and dignified scorn beneath the feeling of regret and sorrow which the poet voices? (5) Point out the single stanza which you think is most powerful and stinging in its rebuke. (6) Do you think that this is a mere occasional poem, that is, the expression of a mere passing emotion due to the incident described? What gives the poem its real, lasting quality? (7) In

what meter is the poem written? Do you like the peculiar effect of the short lines alternating with the longer ones? (8) Compare "Ichabod" with Browning's "The Lost Leader."

Skipper Ireson's Ride (Whittier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This ballad first appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1857. James Russell Lowell, who was editor of the *Atlantic* at the time, suggested the dialect refrain for the sake of local color, an evident improvement. Whittier accepted the change for all the stanzas in which the women are supposed to speak. The incident on which the ballad is based came to Whittier through the refrain of an old song which he learned from a Haverhill Academy schoolmate who came from Marblehead. It is said that the skipper was really not so much to be blamed as his crew for deserting the sinking ship; but Whittier said that he drew the material of his ballad wholly from fancy, and we may add that whatever the facts in the case may be, the underlying truth of the ballad—namely, righteous indignation against cowardly action for selfish motives—remains universal in its appeal.

EXPLANATORY:

274 : 3. *Apuleius's Golden Ass.* Apuleius was a Platonic philosopher of the second century who wrote a romance in which the principal character is turned by magic into an ass. The allusion is not quite apropos.

274 : 4. *one-eyed Calender's horse of brass.* This is a reference to the third royal mendicant, or calender, one of three traveling dervishes who related their adventures in the *Arabian Nights*. Each of the three told of the strange manner in which he had lost his left eye. The third one tells of a horse of brass on the top of a lodestone mountain, but he did not ride this horse. He merely shot it from its pedestal and caused it to sink into the sea. Later on in his adventures he mounted a wonderful black horse which presently spread a pair of wings and bore him swiftly through the air. As it deposited him on the top of a castle, it switched out the mendicant's left eye with a violent blow of its tail. Whittier probably had another *Arabian Nights* story, that of the wonderful magic horse of ivory and ebony, confused with the reference to the brass horse in the third calender's tale.

274 : 6. *Islam's prophet.* Mohammed, the founder of Islamism.

274 : 6. *Al-Borák.* This was the name of the white mule with a man's face, a horse's cheeks, and an eagle's wings, on which Mohammed rode through the air to the Holy City.

274 : 8. *Marblehead.* A rough seaport town near Salem, Massachusetts.

274 : 26. *Bacchus.* The god of wine. Note the appropriateness of the allusion.

274 : 30. *Mænads.* These were the frenzied female worshipers of Bacchus; also called Bacchantes.

275 : 35. *Chaleur Bay.* A part of the Gulf of St. Lawrence between Quebec and New Brunswick.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why is the poem called a ballad? (2) Tell the story in your own words. (3) Construct an outline showing by stanzas the introduction, description of the skipper in the hands of the mob of women, the cause of their vengeance, the ride through Marblehead and the surrounding country, the repentance, and the dismissal of the culprit. (4) Is the narrative naturally told, logical, effective? (5) In what time of the year was the ride made? (6) How does the poet manage to make the scene comical and at the same time tragic and pathetic? (7) Can you see the skipper and his tormentors clearly? How does the poet manage this? (8) What motive for the skipper's desertion of the distressed ship is hinted at in line 40? (9) Why is the metaphor in line 61 appropriate? (10) Why is the skipper described as looking like an Indian idol (line 72)? Does Indian refer to American Indians or to East India? (11) How is the note of pathos touched in the last stanza? (12) Study the refrain throughout the poem. What is the effect of its repetition in dialect?

In School-Days (Whittier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was first published in *Our Young People*, January, 1870, under the editorship of Lucy Larcom. She had asked Whittier to write some verses to print under certain pictures; he replied that he could not do that but she might print "In School-Days" if she did not think it "too spooney for a grave Quaker like myself." S. T. Pickard, Whittier's biographer, says that the little girl referred to was Lydia Ayer, daughter of the poet's nearest neighbor, who died when she was fourteen. Oliver Wendell Holmes in writing to Whittier in 1878 said of this poem, "Let me say to you unhesitatingly that you have written the most beautiful school-boy poem in the English language." We can readily agree with Holmes that the naturalness, simplicity, sweetness, and sincerity of school-boy and school-girl life were never more satisfactorily presented.

EXPLANATORY:

277 : 11. *creeping slow to school.* Suggested by Shakespeare's

> "And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
> And shining morning face, creeping like snail
> Unwillingly to school." *As You Like It*, II: vii.

277 : 16. *icy fretting.* That is, the sun lit up the icy fretwork, or icicles, on the eaves.

278 : 37. *Still.* Is this an adjective or an adverb?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) This little poem tells a story, but it is a reminiscent lyric rather than a ballad or narrative poem. Its purpose is to re-create an emotional moment in the boy's life—one of the sweetest moments that

ever come to youth, the moment in which love first blossoms in all its glory. Show just how the poet manages to catch and preserve this emotional moment. (2) In what stanzas is the background or setting presented? Is it a lifelike picture of the old country schoolhouse? Can you create a similar one out of your own experiences? (3) How is the evening sunlight used to beautify the scene? (4) Does the poet successfully express the bashfulness of the two in the seventh stanza? (5) In what stanza is the emotional climax reached? (6) How is the tone chastened and subdued in the last two stanzas? (7) What figure of speech is effectively used in the first stanza? (8) Determine the meter and rhythm of the poem. (9) Is the feminine rime organic, that is, is it preserved without variation throughout the poem? What effect has the use of the feminine rimes on the musical quality of the lyric? (10) By what rime repetition is the main thought or point of the poem emphasized?

Old Ironsides (Holmes)

INTRODUCTORY:

In 1830 the frigate "Constitution," the historic old warship, was condemned by the Navy Department to be destroyed. Holmes read of this order in a newspaper item and immediately took up a pencil and a scrap of paper and rapidly composed "Old Ironsides." He sent his poem to the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, where it appeared the next day. It struck the popular fancy and practically made the fame of the young poet, who was then a law student at Harvard. "Old Ironsides" was reprinted all over the country, and the Secretary of the Navy was influenced by aroused public sentiment to rescind his order. The "Constitution" was built in 1797, took part in the war against the Mediterranean pirates in 1804, and also in the War of 1812, in both of which wars she had marvellous success and good luck. After Holmes's poem saved her from destruction, she was repaired and put again into service for a number of years. In 1897 the old vessel was put on exhibition at Charlestown Navy Yard near Boston in the celebration of her one-hundredth anniversary. Once again in more recent years the naval authorities proposed to use the old vessel as a target for naval gunnery practice, but again the expression of public sentiment in the newspapers prevented the execution of the plan. The hulk of the famous old vessel may still be seen lying among the discarded relics at the Charlestown Navy Yard.

EXPLANATORY:

279 : 15. *harpies.* Plunderers. In classical mythology the harpies were loathsome creatures, half bird and half woman, who interrupted banquets by smearing their filth on the food after it was placed on the tables.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Does the poet seem to agree in the first stanza that the old ship should be dismantled and broken up? Note how he exults in the past record of "the meteor of the ocean air." (2) In the second stanza what appeal is presented? Do these lines cause you to visualize the

brilliant naval victories won by the old frigate? (3) What emotion is expressed in lines 15 and 16? Do you wonder that the naval authorities winced under the keenness of this thrust? (4) Do you think it would have been better to have sunk the old ship in full rigging than to have broken her up and saved all the valuable parts of her equipment? Why? Note that in the third stanza Holmes expresses his real feeling, while in the first two he has expressed his disgust at the action of the naval authorities. Which is the right word here, satire or sarcasm? (5) What do you think of the poem as a whole? Is it sincere, spirited, patriotic, beautiful? Memorize it if you like it well enough to make it permanently your own.

The Height of the Ridiculous (Holmes)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is one of Holmes's early humorous ballads. In 1830 he composed a dozen or more of similar light, humorous poems, publishing most of them in *The Collegian*, a Harvard periodical. "The Height of the Ridiculous" has remained one of the most popular of all Holmes's shorter humorous poems.

EXPLANATORY:

280 : 10. *the devil to pay.* That is, there will be trouble on hand. There is also a pun on the word *devil*, which means the printer's apprentice, so called because formerly the boy who ran the old-fashioned ink-rollers on the primitive handpress was usually blackened like a devil after doing his day's work.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does the author arouse interest in the first two stanzas? (2) What is the effect of the "trifling jest" in the fourth stanza? (3) Give the process of the revelation of the supposed humorous lines upon the servant. (4) Would you like to read the original poem that had such a direful effect on the big servant? Did the poet act wisely in not giving these verses to the public? (5) In what meter is this poem written? Have you heard or read other ballads in this meter? Give examples.

The Last Leaf (Holmes)

INTRODUCTORY:

"The Last Leaf" was written some time in 1831 or 1832, and first printed in *The Harbinger*, 1833. In a later prefatory note Holmes said: "This poem was suggested by the appearance in one of our streets of a venerable relic of the Revolution (Major Thomas Melville), said to be one of the party who threw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor. He was a fine monumental specimen in his cocked hat and knee breeches, with his buckled shoes and his sturdy cane. The smile with which I, as a young man, greeted him, meant no disrespect to an honored fellow-citizen whose costume was out of date, but whose patriotism never changed with years. I do not recall any earlier example of this form of verse, which was commended by the fastidious Edgar Allan Poe, who made a copy of the whole poem which I have in his own handwriting. Good Abraham Lincoln had a great liking for the poem, and repeated it from memory to Governor Andrew, as the governor himself told me."

John T. Morse, Jr., the biographer of Holmes, believed that "The Last Leaf" would outlive "The Chambered Nautilus." "Is there in all literature a lyric in which drollery, passing nigh into ridicule yet stopping short of it, and sentiment becoming pathos yet not too profound, are so exquisitely intermingled as in 'The Last Leaf'? To spill into the mixture the tiniest fraction of a drop too much of either ingredient was to ruin all. How skillfully, how daintily, how unerringly, Dr. Holmes compounded it, all readers of English know well. It was a light and trifling bit, if you will; but how often has it made the smile and the tear dispute for mastery in a rivalry which is never quite decided!"

EXPLANATORY:

281 : 11. *Crier.* The town crier was an officer whose duty it was to make public proclamations of sales, orders of court, and the like.

281 : 15. *Sad and wan.* Holmes first wrote this "So forlorn," but being criticised for the bad rime, he adopted the change suggested by Mrs. Charles Folsom.

282 : 43. *if I should live to be the last leaf.* Holmes did actually outlive practically all of his early contemporaries.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Visualize the picture of the old man as he was and as he is. (2) What is the effect of the memories of buried loved ones in the fourth stanza? Do you see the appropriateness of the adjective *mossy?* (3) Why does the poet mention his grandmother only to announce that she died long ago? (4) What ludicrous images are developed in stanzas 6 and 7? (5) How does the poet make the application of the thought of the poem in the last stanza? (6) Read the introductory note and point out specific instances of the blending of pathos and humor, which is the chief charm of the poem. (7) Would you class this as a serious or a humorous lyric, or both? (8) Study the structure of the stanza. Notice the frequent occurrence of anapestic feet in the iambic rhythm of the longer lines. The short lines are uniformly one anapestic foot, and the trimeter, or three-stressed lines, usually open with an anapest. The two short lines with answering rime make what is called "tail-rime." Scan the second and last stanzas.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table (Holmes)

SECTION IV

INTRODUCTORY:

The first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1857, contained the first instalment of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table: Or Every Man His Own Boswell.* The opening words were, "I was just going to say, when I was interrupted." This interruption Holmes explains by reminding his readers that just twenty-five years before in the *New England Magazine*. he had written two chatty papers under the title he now resumed in the *Atlantic Monthly*. The papers continued through twelve numbers, and were the life of the new magazine. When the work was published in book form, it was recognized as an original and permanent contribution to our literature.

In the February (1858) number of the *Atlantic* the fourth paper, containing "The Chambered Nautilus," appeared. The poem was everywhere greeted with applause. Whittier said upon reading it that it was booked for immortality. Holmes preferred it above all his other productions, and it has undoubtedly been more frequently quoted than anything else the genial "Autocrat" wrote.

EXPLANATORY:

283 : 36. *Lochiel.* Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel, a Scotch clan leader, called "The Black," and noted for his unrelenting treatment of his enemies in the war of the Highlands.

283 : 40. *Wellington.* Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. He was called "the iron Duke."

284 : 47–60. *Jargonelles . . . Winter-Nelis . . . Saint-Germain . . . Early-Catherine . . . Easter-Beurrè.* Varieties of pears.

284 : 78. *polyphlœsbœan.* Loud-roaring; a Homeric epithet for the ocean.

285 : 86. *Sir Isaac.* Sir Isaac Newton, the great English scientist, discoverer of the law of gravity, etc. The quotation referred to is, "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself, I seem to have been only a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

286 : 121. *harlequin.* A fantastically dressed person whose business is to afford amusement. In the space indicated by the dots above, the correspondent is supposed to compliment the poet and ask for his autograph.

286 : 136. *Mr. Blake play Jesse Rural.* William R. Blake was an excellent actor, especially of old men's parts. His best character was Jesse Rural, the simple-hearted old clergyman in Dion Boucicault's *Old Heads and Young Hearts.*

287 : 154. *Sidney Smith.* An English clergyman and humorist, one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review.*

287 : 157. *The "Quarterly . . . tartarly."* An allusion to the *bon mot* attributed to Byron anent the report that the poet John Keats died from grief over the severe criticism of his works in the *Quarterly Review.*

> "Who killed Johny Keats?"
> "I," said the *Quarterly,*
> So savage and tartarly,
> "I killed Johny Keats."

287 : 168. *Bob Logic.* The Oxonian, a light-headed dandy and wit in Pierce Egan's "Life in London," an extravaganza with elaborate drawings by Cruikshank.

287 : 172. *Paul Pry's umbrella.* Paul Pry, the title character in an English comedy by John Poole, is represented as a meddlesome busybody, always prying into other people's business. He usually carried a big umbrella.

288 : 187. *Aristophanes.* A Greek comedy writer of the fourth century B.C.

288 : 211. *Sir Thomas Browne.* An English physician and noted prose writer, author of *Urn Burial, Religio Medici*, etc. The passage quoted is from the last-named work.

290 : 265. *Derby.* The famous English horse race held at Epsom, in Surrey; named from its founder the Twelfth Earl of Derby (pronounced dar′bĭ).

290 : 272. "*Hunc lapidem,*" etc. "This stone placed here by his sorrowing companions."

290 : 275. *eau lustrale.* Lustral water; used in the ceremony of purification.

290 : 285. *arcus senilis.* Arc of old age; a disease of the eye in old age, by which the edge of the cornea becomes opaque. Note Holmes's use of medical terms and illustrations here and there.

291 : 324. *a flower or a leaf.* Wordsworth wrote several poems on the daisy, one of them in particular being full of similitudes. Compare also Burns's "To a Mountain Daisy."

292 : 333. *Roget's Bridgewater Treatise.* Peter Mark Roget, an English physician and writer, was awarded one of the prizes in the Earl of Bridgewater's foundation for research in the physical sciences.

292 : 339. *unshadowed main.* The ocean without a shadow either of a cloud or of a sail.

292 : 341. *purpled wings.* The nautilus was popularly supposed to have a sort of gauze-like pair of projections to act as sails.

292 : 342. *Siren.* One of the three sea-nymphs, half women and half birds, who by their singing enticed sailors to destruction on their island. See the story in Homer's *Odyssey.*

292 : 351. *irised ceiling.* The inside of the shell is rainbow-colored. Iris was the goddess of the rainbow.

292 : 355. *left the past year's dwelling.* See Holmes's explanation above, lines 349–353.

293 : 363. *Triton.* Son of Neptune; herald of the sea. He is represented as blowing a spiral conch-shell as a trumpet.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Imagine the breakfast table of a boarding-house, with various types of characters, such as the widowed landlady and her son Benjamin Franklin, the divinity student, the timid school-mistress, the angular female dressed in bombazine, and the incorrigible young man, John. Note the frequent use of the dash, especially at the beginning of paragraphs. This indicates some interruption in the Autocrat's talk. Sometimes it is a remark by some one of the boarders, not recorded but clearly implied, and sometimes it is a parenthetical or bracketed side remark of the Autocrat's for the reader's benefit. Note other evidences of the conversational or monologue style. (2) What is the first analogy suggested, and how is it developed through the first three paragraphs? (3) What compliment is implied in the speech of the divinity student, and how does the Autocrat show his gratitude? (4) What is the effect of the Autocrat's comparison of the student's head to an egg? (5) How does the Autocrat turn the student's remark so as to lead up to another analogy? (6) Explain the remarks of the Autocrat on the pebble, and comment on the figure

in the last one, beginning "throne," etc. (7) What effect was produced upon the divinity student by the statement concerning the number of analogies in the universe? (Note that the effect is stated in another amusing figure or analogy.) (8) What is the purpose of all these analogies? (9) What new topic does the Autocrat advance in the section beginning "I know well enough"? Has he forgotten his general topic of analogies, or will he come back to it? (10) Are the Autocrat's remarks about the humorous literary man true? Can you give an example in your own community of a joker who finds it hard to get himself taken seriously? (11) What remark do you imagine provoked the Autocrat's reply "Oh, indeed no!"? Do you find in this paragraph evidences of Holmes's dislike of Puritanism in its extreme forms? (12) How does the Autocrat manage to get back to his original topic of analogies? (See the quotation from Sir Thomas Browne.) (13) What does Holmes mean by "every now and then we throw an old schoolmate over the stern with a string tied to him"? By "the ruffled bosom of prosperity and progress, with a sprig of diamonds stuck in it"? By "grow we must, if we outgrow all that we love"? (14) The comparisons of life to a sea voyage and a race are almost as old as literature itself; how does Holmes manage to make these old figures fresh and suggestive? (15) Notice the skill with which the Autocrat introduces his last figure — the one for which he has all along been preparing. In what form does it appear? Show how he really explains the poem before he reads it.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS ON "THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS"

(1) Point out the topic of each stanza and thus make an outline of the poem. (Remember that the "wrecked" shell before the poet is the lyrical stimulus, and hence the poem is built entirely around this object.) (2) Compare the analogy developed in the poem with some of those previously presented. Is this one so old or trite as those previously introduced? (3) What are some of the effects on the imagination and emotional nature as you read? (4) Holmes said of "The Chambered Nautilus": "In writing the poem I was filled with a better feeling — the highest state of mental exaltation and the most crystalline clairvoyance, as it seemed to me, that had ever been granted me — I mean that lucid vision of one's thought, and of all forms of expression which will be at once precise and musical, which is the poet's special gift, however large or small in amount or value." Can you see evidences of this exalted state of mind and this absolute command of language in the poem? (5) The stanza is an original one in its form. It is composed in iambic rhythm with lines of varying length, ranging from three (lines 2, 3, 6) to five (lines 1, 4, 5) and six (line 7) stresses or feet to the line. Show what lines rime and see if the model is consistently followed in all of the five stanzas. (6) Memorize the poem — if not the whole of it, by all means the last stanza.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table (Holmes)

Section XI

INTRODUCTORY:

"The Deacon's Masterpiece: or The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay" has usually been accepted simply as an example of Holmes's excellent Yankee humor, and there is nothing in the text or its setting to show that he intended it as anything else. Some have even gone so far as to point out Deacon David Holmes, one of the poet's ancestors, as the original "Deacon" who built the wonderful chaise. But Professor Barrett Wendell in his chapter on Jonathan Edwards in *A Literary History of America* says, "Often misunderstood, generally thought no more than a piece of comic extravagance, Dr. Holmes's 'One-Hoss Shay' is really among the most pitiless satires in our language. Born and bred a Calvinist, Holmes, who lived in the full tide of Unitarian hopefulness, recoiled from the appalling doctrines which darkened his youth. He could find no flaw in their reasoning, but would not accept their conclusions." According to this interpretation, "The Deacon's Masterpiece," written in 1858, just a hundred years after the death of Jonathan Edwards, signalizes the complete collapse of the extreme Calvinistic doctrines advocated with so much force and logic by the great preacher. This interpretation becomes all the more convincing when we recall that the deacon's chaise was, according to the poem, completed in 1755, just about the time of the publication of Edwards' masterpiece, *The Freedom of the Will.*

EXPLANATORY:

294 : 17. *tertian and quartan.* A tertian fever appears every first and third day, skipping one day; a quartan fever appears every first and fourth day, skipping two days.

294 : 31. *quasi.* As if.

294 : 43. *Thomas Sanchez.* A Jesuit priest (died 1610), who wrote many tracts, one of which is mentioned in the text.

295 : 58. *Georgius Secundus.* George II, king of England from 1727 to 1760, was the son of George I of Hanover, Germany.

295 : 60. *Lisbon-town.* Lisbon, Portugal, was shaken by a disastrous earthquake on November 1, 1755.

295 : 62. *Braddock's army.* The English general Braddock was severely defeated at Fort Duquesne in western Pennsylvania by the French and Indians, July 9, 1755.

295 : 68. *felloe.* A segment of the rim of a wheel.

295 : 68. *thill.* One of the shafts.

295 : 70. *thoroughbrace.* The strong leather strap between the two parts of the C-spring supporting the body of an old-fashioned carriage.

297 : 138. *whippletree.* Singletree.

297 : 140. *encore.* The same.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does Holmes introduce "The Deacon's Masterpiece"? (2) Is there any hint that the poem is a satire on Jonathan Edwards and his Calvinistic doctrines? Why do you suppose Holmes kept this in the background? (Remember how and where the piece was first published.) (3) Why does the poet break off line 51 so suddenly? (4) What three misfortunes or disasters are mentioned in the second stanza, and why? (5) Can you pick any flaw in the deacon's reasoning? (6) What is the effect of putting his remarks in dialect? (7) How does the poet gradually lead up to his climax date, November 1, 1855? (8) Read the final passage, beginning "The parson was working his Sunday's text," and comment on the skill of the conclusion. (9) What is the meter of the poem? (10) What is the effect of frequent repetition of the same rime sound, as *shay — way — day — stay — delay* in the same stanza?

Brute Neighbors (Thoreau)

INTRODUCTORY:

Walden, or Life in the Woods, the most significant of all Thoreau's productions, was issued in 1854. Thoreau kept elaborate notebooks or journals during his residence at Walden from July, 1845, to September, 1847, and the book was made up largely from extracts from these journals, though the material was thoroughly revised and fused into a more or less connected series of chapters before publication. Chapter XII, which we have chosen for reprinting, is complete in itself, though marked by some evidences of the lack of apparent sequence which is characteristic of practically all of Thoreau's writings. The introductory dialogue seems to divide its interest between a meditation on the uselessness of the stir and worry of life and the preparations for a fishing excursion. The preceding chapters have a good deal to do with other fishing excursions, and so this introduction may be considered as a sort of transition from what has gone before. Thoreau seems here to be consciously imitating the style of Izaak Walton's *Complete Angler*, a book full of delightful meditation and philosophizing as well as instructions in the art of fishing. The connection between this introduction and the body of the chapter is not apparent, but we may assume that while the two friends are tramping toward their fishing-ground, Thoreau discourses on his experiences with the birds and animals around his hut in the woods. In other words, like Izaak Walton, he takes his fishing excursions not merely as opportunities for recreation and sustenance, but for meditation and for summarizing his observations on nature and life.

EXPLANATORY:

299 : 1. *a companion.* The poet, William Ellery Channing, was one of Thoreau's most intimate friends.

299 : 14. *Bose.* A common designation for a farm dog. Note the satire and humorous treatment.

300 : 62. *Con-fut-see.* The more accurate foreign spelling of the name of Confucius, the Chinese religious teacher.

300 : 64. *Mem.* Memorandum. The hermit, unable to recall his original train of thought, makes a memorandum of at least one deduction from the experience — namely, "There is never but one opportunity of a kind."

301 : 77. *Pilpay & Co.* That is, the maker of animal fables like those of Aesop or La Fontaine. Pilpay, or Bidpai, is the ancient Sanscrit title of a Hindu wise man or collector of apothegms, fables, and the like.

301 : 83. *distinguished naturalist.* Probably Professor Louis Agassiz of Harvard College, for whom Thoreau collected many specimens.

303 : 173. *red squirrel . . . particularly familiar.* The following paragraph from H. S. Salt's *Life of Thoreau* relates the anecdote referred to: "A story is told how a squirrel which he had taken home for a few days in order to observe its habits, refused to be set at liberty, returning again and again to its new friend with embarrassing persistence, climbing up on his knee, sitting on his hand, and at last gaining the day by hiding its head in the folds of his waistcoat — an appeal which Thoreau was not able to withstand."

304 : 187. *Myrmidons.* The fierce soldiers of Thessaly, followers of Achilles in the Trojan War.

305 : 213. *return with his shield or upon it.* Plutarch relates how a Spartan mother gave her son a shield and sent him to battle saying, "My son, either this or upon this"; that is, either return with your shield and victory, or be borne back as a corpse upon it.

305 : 214. *Achilles . . . Patroclus.* When Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek forces in the siege of Troy, took from Achilles a maiden he had won in battle, the great warrior sulked in his tent, refusing longer to aid the Greeks in the battle. But at last, angered by the report that Hector had slain Patroclus, he came forth and avenged the death of his dearest friend by killing Hector and dragging his body around the walls of Troy. Read the account in the *Iliad.*

305 : 235. *Austerlitz or Dresden.* Two of Napoleon's great victories on Austrian soil; the battle of Austerlitz was fought December 2, 1805, and that of Dresden on August 26, 1813.

305 : 236. *two killed.* Captain Isaac Davis and Abner Hosmer, named below, were the only two Americans killed in the battle of Concord. Luther Blanchard was a member of Major Buttrick's command and was wounded in the fight. See the notes on Emerson's "Concord Hymn," p. 520.

306 : 267. *Hotel des Invalides.* The French retreat for aged and maimed soldiers, founded at Paris in 1670.

306 : 273. *Kirby and Spence.* Joint authors of an *Introduction to Entomology*, a book on insects.

306 : 275. *Huber.* A Swiss naturalist; died 1831.

306 : 276. *Aeneas Sylvius.* Pope Pius II; died 1464.

306 : 280. *Eugenius the Fourth.* Pope of Rome; died 1447.

307 : 284. *Olaus Magnus.* A Swedish ecclesiastic of the sixteenth century.

307 : 290. *Webster's Fugitive-Slave Bill.* Passed in 1850. Webster was not the author of the bill, but his support of it drew down upon him the severe attacks of the abolitionists. See Whittier's poem "Ichabod" (p. 272) in this connection. Thoreau, though never very active nor conspicuous in public life, was an ardent abolitionist, and once in a public address he fearlessly defended John Brown.

307 : 300. *jerbilla.* Another form, and apparently found only in Thoreau's writings, of *gerbillus*, a genus of jumping mice. Compare the jerboa of the Old World.

308 : 332. *winged . . . as his horse.* An allusion to Pegasus, the winged horse of Greek mythology. Why are poets supposed to ride on Pegasus? (See a classic mythology.)

308 : 336. *Mill-dam.* The business section of Concord, near which once stood an old mill-dam.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What purpose is served by the introductory dialogue? In what style is it written? (2) At what point does the poet come in? In what bit of humor does the hermit indulge on the approach of the poet? (3) What is the hermit thinking about in his opening meditation? Does he revert to this again? Why is he unable to re-create the exact state of mind and train of thought after the interruption? (4) Do you see any connection between this introduction and the body

of this chapter? (5) How did Thoreau treat the mice in his hut? Is this the ordinary method of dealing with mice? (6) What do you learn about the habits of the partridge, or ruffed grouse, in the next paragraph? (7) How does the author add a human and humorous tone to the battle of the ants? Do you think he was serious in comparing this battle with some of the greatest battles of history? (8) Explain the humorous allusions to the Greek heroes in the siege of Troy. (See the explanatory notes above.) (9) Would your feelings and interests be similar to Thoreau's in observing such a battle? (10) Give an account of some similar conflict between insects or animals that you may have observed. (This may be made into a composition.) (11) In the concluding paragraph of this section is there a touch of satire in the reference to the political situation of the times? Explain. (12) What humorous effects are aimed at in the paragraph on domestic animals in the woods, such as the farm dog and the winged cat? (13) Describe fully the hermit's experience in chasing the loon. Do you not think this sort of hunting is much better than shooting the wild things? (14) Write a brief composition on the literary excellences of Thoreau's style as it is illustrated in this section on chasing the loon. Ask yourself the following questions in preparing this composition: Is the passage unified, effective in sequence, climactic? Is the treatment sympathetic, poetic, well sustained in dominant tone? Is the diction precise and suggestive? Is the material interesting and clearly and logically presented? What is the effect of the constant recurrence to the wild, weird laughter of the loon? Can you imagine that you have yourself seen and heard this strange bird? Note that the first paragraph on the loon ends with the sentence, "He commonly went off in the rain"; how is this worked out at the end of the next long paragraph? Is it a pretty fancy to say that the god of loons had sent the rain as an answer to the bird's prayer?

The Vision of Sir Launfal (Lowell)

INTRODUCTORY:

In February, 1848, Lowell said in a letter to his friend Mr. Briggs that he had composed "a sort of story . . . more likely to be popular than what I write generally. Maria [his wife] thinks well of it. I shall probably publish it myself next summer." It was not until December that "The Vision of Sir Launfal" appeared in a thin volume by itself. The poem was written rapidly, being completed within two days, so declared Mr. Underwood, during which time the poet worked at a white heat, scarcely taking time to eat or sleep. But it is the result of a lifelong tendency toward mysticism or the realization of God in the poet's nature, as is indicated in several early minor poems on similar themes, such as "The Search" and "The Parable," both of which introduce the idea that Christ is found only in service to the outcast, the poor, and the weak.

Lowell's final note in the first edition gives the best introductory explanation of the meaning of the poem. "According to the mythology of the Romancers, the San Greal, or Holy Grail, was the cup out of which Jesus partook of the Last Supper with his disciples. It was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration, for many years in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed; but one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favorite enterprise of the Knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. Sir Galahad was at last successful in finding it, as may be read in the seventeenth book of the Romance of King Arthur. Tennyson has made Sir Galahad the subject of one of his most exquisite poems.

"The plot (if I may give that name to anything so slight) of the following poem is my own, and, to serve its purpose, I have enlarged the circle of competition in search of the miraculous cup in such a manner as to include, not only other persons than the heroes of the Round Table, but also a period of time subsequent to the supposed date of King Arthur's reign."

The poem contains several verbal infelicities and is faulty in structure as a whole, but, as Mr. Ferris Greenslet says, "for all that, it has stood the searching test of time; it is beloved now by thousands of young American readers, for whom it has been the first initiation into the beauty of poetical idealism."

EXPLANATORY:

312. *Sir Launfal.* Lowell borrowed the name but nothing more from an old metrical romance called *Sir Launfal* by Sir Thomas Chestre. Another more familiar form of the name is Sir Launcelot.

312 : 3. *list.* Pleased, wished.

312 : 9–10. *Not only around our infancy*, etc. Alluding to Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality," lines 66 ff., "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," etc. Note how Lowell takes an enlarged view, especially in lines 13 and 19.

312 : 12. *Sinais.* Sinai was the mountain between the Red Sea and Canaan, where Moses saw and talked with God, and received the tablets of stone with the ten commandments on them. See Exodus 19 and 20.

312 : 17. *druid wood.* The oak groves in which the old Celtic priests performed their religious rites. Compare "Druids of eld," *Evangeline*, line 3.

312 : 18. *benedicite.* Blessing; from the Latin canticle beginning "Benedicite omnia opera Domini," "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord" (Psalms 145:10).

312 : 21. *Earth gets its price*, etc. Earth is used in the sense of "the world," or evil. Note the contrast with *heaven* in line 29. Another echo of Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality," line 77, "Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own."

312 : 27. *cap and bells.* The medieval court fool, or jester, wore a cap with several spangles to which bells were attached; hence "cap and bells" has come to be the symbol of folly. How do we pay our lives for a cap and bells?

313 : 29–30. *'Tis heaven alone that is given away*, etc. Compare Isaiah 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat."

313 : 33. *And what is so rare as a day in June?* This is perhaps the most frequently quoted passage in all Lowell's poetry. June has been called Lowell's month. It is significant that he was the first of the New England poets to break away from the conventional laudation of May after the manner of the British poets, and substitute the more suitable month of June as the "high-tide of the year" in the New England climate. For Lowell's other notable poems on June, see "Under the Willows," "Al Fresco," "Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line" in the *Biglow Papers*, etc.

313 : 47. *mean.* Small, insignificant. Similarly in line 344, "The meanest serf in Sir Launfal's land." Compare also Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality," lines 202–203, "To me the meanest flower that blows can give Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

313 : 56. *nice.* Exact, finely discriminating.

314 : 81. *Everything is happy now.* Compare Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality," line 29, "And all the earth is gay," etc.

315 : 99. *Holy Grail.* See Lowell's explanation, introductory note.

315 : 103. *rushes.* The medieval floor covering before the days of carpets.

315 : 116. *North Countree.* An indefinite region to the north of central England, the land of the medieval ballads.

317 : 166. *a slender mite.* Alluding to the widow's two mites (Luke 21:2).

317 : 168. *all-sustaining Beauty*, etc. The spirit of God which runs through all things. Compare Emerson's idea of the Earth-soul and the Over-soul.

317 : 172. *a god . . . store.* That is, a godlike power makes it an abundant store to feed the soul.

317 : 175. *summers.* Why *five* thousand *summers?*

317 : 181. *The little brook.* Lowell said he drew this picture from the brook at Watertown near Cambridge. "As I stood on the hill just before you enter the village, the stillness of the fields around me was delicious, broken only by the tinkle of the little brook, which runs too swiftly for Frost to catch it."

317 : 184. *groined.* Fitted or matched at the angles of the curved or arched roof.

317 : 190. *forest-crypt.* A crypt is a recess, as in the basement of a cathedral where the pillars rest. Note how many architectural terms are used, and explain the meaning of each as clearly as you can.

318 : 196. *arabesques.* Fantastic ornaments of leaves, etc., used in the Arabian or Mohammedan style of architecture.

318 : 212. *cheeks of Christmas.* Visualize the picture in this personification.

318 : 213. *corbel.* A carved projection or bracket of wood or stone. Why does the poet say every corbel and rafter is *sprouting?*

318 : 216. *Yule-log.* Yule is borrowed from the Scandinavian festival of Juul, held in honor of the god Thor. It was held about the same time as, and is now identified with, our Christmas festival.

319 : 231. *still.* Is this an adjective or an adverb?

319 : 233. *seneschal.* The officer of a medieval castle who had charge of the festivals.

319 : 244. *A single crow.* Note the effectiveness of this image. Crows rarely go alone. Compare "The crows flapped over by twos and threes" (line 109).

319 : 254. *recked of.* Minded, cared for.

319 : 255. *surcoat.* The loose garment worn over the armor.

320 : 259. *idle.* Ineffective, useless. See also line 330.

320 : 281. *Him who died on the tree.* This whole passage is based on Christ's crucifixion as described in the Gospels.

321 : 294. *ashes and dust.* Compare Job 42:6, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

321 : 307. *Beautiful Gate.* "The gate of the temple which is called Beautiful," Acts 3:2. Line 308 echoes John 10:7, "I am the door," and line 309 alludes to I Corinthians 3:16, "Ye are the temple of God," etc.

321 : 315. *"Lo, it is I, be not afraid."* An exact quotation of John 6:20.

322 : 320. *my body broken for thee.* See accounts of the Last Supper, Matthew 26:26–28, Mark 14:22–24, Luke 22:19–20.

322 : 328. *swound.* Why is this archaic form of *swoon* used?

322 : 336. *hangbird.* The oriole, so called from its swinging nest.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

General. (1) Why is this poem called "The *Vision* of Sir Launfal"? Just where does the vision begin and end? (This is the most important point in the analysis of the structure of the poem. Mr. Greenslet thinks nine out of ten readers of the poem have missed the real point of its structure.) (2) The Prelude to Part First opens with the introductory figure of the musing organist (lines 1–8), and then in a general way states the theme of the poem — namely, the key to the truly happy or Christlike life is the seizing of daily opportunities for service (implied specifically in lines 11–12) — showing that all through our lives come these opportunities for service as well as temptations to spend our days foolishly (lines 9–32). The theme is then elaborated by a full description of June, typifying happiness in human life (lines 33–93) and suggesting the keeping of Sir Launfal's vow (lines 94–95). Part First opens with Sir Launfal's decision to go on his quest for the Holy Grail, typifying again the virtuous and happy life by a specific example in Sir Launfal himself (lines 96–105), concluding with his sleep and the announcement of the vision (lines 106–108). In line 109 we have the beginning of the vision in which Sir Launfal sees his own imaginary adventures. There is an introductory description of summer and its siege of the castle and then the young knight rides forth on his quest. There is just the one simple incident in Part First of how Sir Launfal in his pride and youth tossed a golden coin to the leper by his gate, only to have it rejected because it came not from the heart (lines 109–173). All goes well until we come to the Prelude to Part Second, in which the poet practically takes the readers out of the dream, or vision (though he does not say so), to show them a picture of winter as a contrast to the picture of June in the first Prelude. The contrast is most successful, but the unity and sequence of the composition as a whole are seriously disrupted. The last part of the second Prelude, beginning at line 211, is distinctly a part of the vision, in which Sir Launfal sees his castle at Christmas, warm and brilliantly lighted, but himself an outcast cold and shelterless. Part Second begins with a recurrence to the winter scene just described, and goes on to relate the simple incident of how Sir Launfal came back as an old man and an outcast from his own hard gate, and found the Holy Grail in his whole-souled service to the leper who was still conveniently sitting by the castle gate. In this section there are two subordinate visions within the main vision—namely, lines 261–272 and 302–327. The conclusion (lines 334–347) follows Sir Launfal's awakening and transformation (lines 328–333). Work all this out in an outline of about one full page. (3) Give orally some of the striking contrasts brought out in the two Preludes and in the two Parts. (You may be asked later to write a composition on the contrasts of the poem.) (4) Explain the nature and fitness of the medieval legend which Lowell used as the vehicle for his moral conceptions. How has he enlarged the bounds of this legend? (5) What kind of emotion seems to have animated the poet in this composition? (6) In which does the poet seem to be most interested, the nature pictures, the story, or the underlying moral teachings? (7) State in your own language at least two large moral lessons developed in the poem. (8) How would you classify the poem? (There is a large narrative element in "The Vision," but the poem is cast in the form of the English or irregular ode. Note the irregular stanzas, the varied meters and rime schemes, the exalted subject-matter and dignified manner of treatment, and the steady progression toward a climax. All these are characteristics of the ode.) (9) The meter of the first eight lines is iambic pentameter, as in

Begin | ning doubt | fully | and far | away (2);

but the body of the poem is in a sort of combination of iambic and anapestic tetrameter. Some lines are entirely iambic, as

Its arms | outstretched | the dru | id wood (17);

and some are almost wholly anapestic, as

Now the heart | is so full | that a drop | over fills it (61);

and anapestic feet are so commonly used throughout that we may say that the rhythm is characteristically anapestic. There are some shorter lines, as

And rat | tles and wrings
The ic | y strings (227–228)

each of two feet, and

And gloomed | by itself | apart (144)

of three feet. The rimes range from the usual couplet to alternate and inclosed rimes, and in some cases the rime sound is repeated three times. Scan lines 225–239. Note that the last *-less* in line 232 is accented for the sake of the rime, while the other two examples of the same syllable are unaccented. (10) Suggested memory passages: Lines 9–12; 21–32; 33–56; 174–210; 324–327. (11) Suggested subjects for compositions: Contrasts in "The Vision of Sir Launfal"; The Imagery of the Poem; Lessons from "Sir Launfal"; Medieval Life as Suggested in the Poem; Lowell's Use of Bible Thought and Phraseology in This Poem; Some Faults of Language and Structure in "The Vision of Sir Launfal"; Lowell's and Whittier's Nature Pictures Compared; A Comparison of "The Vision of Sir Launfal" with Thomas Chatterton's "A Ballad of Charitie"; Lowell's Indebtedness to Wordsworth in "The Vision of Sir Launfal"; A Summer and a Winter Day in Our Town.

Specific. (1) Does the musical figure of the introductory lines fit the mystical nature of the theme and Lowell's own practice in the construction of the poem? (2) Visualize and comment on the beautiful imagery in lines 7 and 8. (3) Work out the contrast between Lowell's ideas in lines 9–20 and 21–32 and Wordsworth's in the fifth and sixth strophes of the "Ode on Immortality." (4) Just why do we not know when "We Sinais climb"? (See line 11 for hint.) (5) Give some examples from your own observation and experience of the thought "Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us." (6) What is the figure in lines 35–36? What instrument did the poet have in mind? (7) Explain the force of the italicized words in the following expressions: "the cowslip *startles*" (line 45); "the buttercup *catches the sun* in its *chalice*" (line 46); "a blade too *mean*" (line 47); "*atilt* like a blossom" (line 50); "the heart in her *dumb* breast *flutters and sings*" (line 54); "In the *nice* ear of Nature" (line 56); "how *clear* bold chanticleer" (line 77). (Is the accidental rime in this last phrase a blemish? Why?) (8) Do you catch the poet's enthusiasm for the beautiful June day? Why is June called Lowell's month? (See note on line 33.) (9) What is the effect of all this beauty on men? (See lines 80 ff.) (10) Why is it inappropriate to speak of "unscarred heaven" (line 87)? (11) Explain the simile in lines 91–93. Is the figure imaginative? (12) How is the Prelude distinctly linked to Part First? (13) Why is Sir Launfal made to say that he may have a vision (line 104)? Did the people of medieval times believe in visions? (14) Is the picture in lines 109–127 intended as a direct continuation of the June scene in the first Prelude, or is it a later summer picture seen in Sir Launfal's dream? (15) Work out carefully the military figure beginning in line 115 and continuing to line 127, and reverted to again below in line 134. What were "her pavilions tall" and "every green tent"? (16) How do the words suggest the idea in "The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang"? Note other examples of similar effect, as in line 156. (17) Why is Sir Launfal called a "maiden Knight" (line 130)? (18) How is the castle used as a foil to the knight? (19) Explain "made morn" in line 147. (20) What unpoetical expression is found in line 148? Does the exigency of rime justify a poet in using a prosaic expression? (21) Is it natural for a leper or a beggar to refuse a piece of gold? What mysterious spirit seems to be incarnated in this leper? (22) What sort of language and philosophy does the leper use? (23) It is said that Lowell has put a medieval European legend in the setting of a New England landscape. Is this true? Would the description of the New England summer and winter be quite applicable to the vague "North Countree"? Remember that the artist is merely required to create the correct general impression. (24) What do you think of the poetical quality of the description of the frozen brook (lines 181–210)? Select five of the most striking or picturesque phrases. (25) Compare Lowell's picture of the fire (lines 215–224) with Whittier's in "Snow-Bound," lines 120–132 and 155–174. Which is the more accurate? Which is the more imaginative? (26) Contrast the two pictures of Sir Launfal, lines 129–139 and 225–232. (27) Comment on the simile in line 233. Is it imaginative? (28) Why is the castle made so warm and comfortable in lines 211–239? (29) "Again it was morning" (line 246); find the exact line that this is intended to parallel, and contrast the two passages introduced by these lines. (30) Why does the poet bring the knight to the exact spot where the leper first stood? (31) What is the purpose of Sir Launfal's musing, or the vision within "The Vision" (lines 261–272)? Does this give you some idea of how the knight had spent the intervening years? (32) What breaks in on this vision? Is the contrast effective? (33) By what means is the repulsiveness of the leper expressed in lines 275–279? Select the special words that strengthen the impression of loathsomeness. Why is the leper made more repulsive here than in lines 148–157? (34) How has Sir Launfal's attitude toward the leper changed as indicated in his speech, lines 280–287? (35) Does line 294 mean that "the heart within him was ashes and dust" now or when he was a young knight? (36) Into what personality is the leper transfigured now that Sir Launfal shows Christian charity and service to him (lines 303 ff.)? Note whose words the poet puts into the leper's mouth (lines 315 ff.). (37) What is the meaning of *brine* (line 311)? Why is "shaggy unrest" (line 313) an effective image? (38) Why did Sir Launfal not go on his quest for the Holy Grail when awake? (39) How do you picture Sir Launfal after you have read through the poem? Does the poet make it perfectly clear to you that Sir Launfal had never grown old? (40) What previous figure does line 338 recall? Is it artistic thus to revert to the opening passage at the close of the piece? Why? (41) Later in his life Lowell made a fine address on "Democracy." Is there any hint of his belief in this doctrine in the conclusion to "The Vision of Sir Launfal"?

The Present Crisis (Lowell)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was written in 1844, when the annexation of Texas as a slave-holding state was being discussed throughout the nation. The abolitionists bitterly opposed the admission of this enormous state as new slave territory, and used every available means to defeat the proposed measure for the admission of Texas into the Union. Lowell's poem was widely copied and used in many public addresses all over the country. Though "The Present Crisis" was called forth by a specific national problem, it rises above the particular and is applicable to any great crisis in the life of a nation or an individual. It can be read with almost as accurate application to the crisis of the World War as to the particular problem toward which it was directed at the time of its composition. It is full of enthusiasm and righteous indignation and amply illustrates Lowell's deeply religious nature as well as his intense zeal for moral reforms. Some one has suggested that the effect of the poem is the same as that of a great sermon or moral exhortation.

EXPLANATORY:

323 : 17. *earth's electric circle.* A reference to the electric telegraph, then just coming into general use.

324 : 23. *Messiah.* One sent. When Christ came as the Messiah, his new teachings divided men into two great classes, those for him and those against him; so each new crisis in the progress of civilization is a new Messiah to bring men to decide for truth or falsehood.

324 : 24. *Parts the goats,* etc. See Matthew 25 : 33.

324 : 27. *Doom.* Judgment.

324 : 27. *shakes the dust.* "When ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them." Luke 9 : 5.

324 : 28. *Truth alone is strong.* Compare Bryant's famous stanza from "The Battle-Field":

> Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
> Th' eternal years of God are hers;
> But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
> And dies among his worshippers.

324 : 37. *the Word.* The Messiah; new system of religion founded by Christ. See John 1 : 1.

324 : 38. *Truth forever on the scaffold.* Compare lines 28–30.

325 : 43. *oracular.* Prophetic, like the old Greek oracle at Delphi, mentioned in the next line.

325 : 46. *Cyclops.* The one-eyed giant Polyphemus of Greek legend. See the story of Ulysses' adventure with Polyphemus in the *Odyssey* of Homer, Book IX.

325 : 49. *Gropes in yet unblasted regions.* What specific territory did Lowell have in mind?

325 : 57. *hurled the contumelious stone.* A reference to the stoning of the apostle Stephen, the first Christian martyr. *Contumelious* means contemptuous. See Acts 7 : 54–60.

326 : 63. *mounts of anguish.* That is, Calvaries. See line 62.

326 : 64. *Credo.* Creed; from the Latin "I believe," the first word in the Apostles' Creed.

326 : 65. *the first man.* Does this refer to Adam or to the first man who made the decision for God and right?

326 : 67. *Judas.* Explain the allusion. See Matthew 26.

326 : 75. *Turn those tracks*, etc. The prose order would be, "Do those tracks that made Plymouth Rock sublime turn toward the Past or the Future?" What answer is implied in this interrogation?

327 : 86. *uncouth.* Literally, unknown; here, inapplicable.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Read the poem through carefully with the following analysis before you: 1. A good or evil deed done anywhere in the world affects all humanity, for mankind are one in spirit (lines 1–20). 2. Hours of crisis, or decision to stand for good or evil, truth or falsehood, come to every man and every nation; all history proves this, and history proves also that in the long run truth, or good, triumphs over falsehood, or evil (lines 21–45). 3. Slavery, "the earth-born Cyclops," is the great moral problem or crisis demanding decision now (lines 46–50). 4. It is noble to side with truth, even if it is temporarily unpopular to do so; for history proves that the mob will come in time to reverence the very heroes whom it put to the stake for their devotion to truth (lines 51–70). 5. We cannot rest upon the moral victories of our ancestors; for new occasions bring new duties, and every generation must play its part in the onward and upward progress of truth (lines 71–90). (2) Now take the stanzas up one by one for closer study. Explain the figurative expressions in the first stanza. Why is the adjective *aching* used, line 1? Why is the century-plant chosen? What is the force of the adjective *thorny?* (3) What figure is developed in the second stanza?

The coming of a new era which brings in some new reform is compared to the birth of a child; but this only prepares the way for the coming or birth of some yet greater reform, some "yet mightier man-child." (4) The third stanza states the contrast to the thought developed in the first two stanzas—namely, that an evil deed causes pain and despair to the oppressed all over the world. The slave is pictured as an unburied corpse crawling around and delving in the earth, which, indeed, is nobler than his own degraded body. To bring out the parallelism more strongly, read the first and third stanzas together. (5) The fourth stanza gives the philosophic reason for the thought expressed in the first three stanzas. State this reason in as simple words as you can. The idea that humanity has one great soul and is knit together in one vast frame is one of the transcendental doctrines set forth by Emerson and others. (6) Paraphrase the thought expressed in the fifth stanza, beginning "Once to every man and nation." What contrasted phrases or words do you note in lines 22 to 25? Memorize this stanza. (7) What specific decision did Lowell have in mind in his query in the sixth stanza? How does he imply that evil may temporarily or apparently win? (8) In stanza seven how does the poet show us the great crises of past history? Is it true that men are so busy "in court and market" that they never realize the great moral crises of their own day until history has recorded its verdict? (9) In lines 36 to 40, why and how does the poet repeat the idea that wrong may flourish for a time, but that right will win the final victory? Who is "the great Avenger"? Memorize the passage beginning "Truth forever on the scaffold." (10) In stanza nine, in lines 41 to 45, the poet warns us that although we cannot always tell what is important or unimportant in our own age, yet the soul is always "oracular," that is, we always catch some whisper or warning of what is right or wrong. What punishment is promised to those who "make compromise with sin," line 45? (11) Explain the figurative representation of slavery in the tenth stanza, lines 46 to 50. You will have to read the story of Ulysses and Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*, Book IX, before you can catch the significance of all the allusions in this stanza. (12) What specific application is intended in the thought of lines 51 to 55? Did Lowell, Whittier, and others suffer from their early adherence to the cause of the abolition of slavery? (13) In lines 56 to 65, the poet appeals to history to prove that the heroes of the past are those who stood for right even when they were put to death for so doing. What specific martyrdom is alluded to in line 57? What other examples, or "new Calvaries," can you cite in history by which we can trace the progress of truth? (14) Is it true, as expressed in lines 69 to 70, that the mob frequently comes to revere the very martyr whom it burned at the stake? What is implied in the word *crouches*, line 67? What became of Judas after he betrayed Christ? (15) Express in your own words the thought of lines 71 to 80. What strong appeal is here made to New Englanders to be true to their ideals? (16) What severe warning is expressed in lines 81 to 85? (17) What final appeal is made in the last stanza? Explain the metaphors in this stanza. (18) Now examine the meter and stanzaic structure of the poem. Note that Lowell has used the long trochaic octameter, or eight-stress line, which Tennyson employed in his famous poem "Locksley Hall." Lowell constructed a five-line stanza riming *aabbb*, while Tennyson used the simple couplet stanza. There is a distinct pause at the middle of each line. When you once catch the rhythm of this meter, you will observe that it is well adapted to the dignified expression of profound moral truth. The poem is rather difficult, but it will repay careful study. As a final exercise, let the student write out a prose paraphrase of the entire poem.

Aladdin (Lowell)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Aladdin," one of the most singable and truly lyrical of all of Lowell's shorter poems, was first published as a head-piece to the third and last of an otherwise unsuccessful series of facetious, satiric verses called "Our Own," which appeared in *Putnam's Magazine* from April to June, 1853. The song is immediately followed by these lines of comment:

> So mused a poet, quite as wise as either you or I,
> Coughing with dust, as Crassus' coach rolled smoothly-swinging by;
> And, if I understand his thought, which may be something trite,
> He was (which for a poet's much) within two-thirds of right.

EXPLANATORY:

327 : 4. *Aladdin's Lamp.* Tell the story of "Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp" as found in *The Arabian Nights Entertainment.*

327 : 8. *castles in Spain.* Ideal or imaginary possessions of a dreamer; dreams.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the theme of "Aladdin"? (2) How is the contrast worked out in the two stanzas? (3) What point in the original story of "Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp" is suggested in lines 11 and 12? (4) What is the tone of the poem? (5) Do you note any learned or pedantic words? What is the effect of the simple and unpretentious diction? (6) The three-stressed anapestic rhythm is fully carried out in the last two lines of the poem, but in most of the other lines one or two anapestic feet and two or one substituted iambic feet occur. One line, the eleventh, has four feet, two of them being anapestic and two iambic. Work out these points for yourself. Do you like the lilt of this rhythm?

The Courtin' (Lowell)

INTRODUCTORY:

While the *Biglow Papers*, First Series, was going through the press in 1848, the printer reported to Lowell that there was a blank page that needed to be filled. Lowell immediately sat down and wrote a review of the work, pretending that it was taken from *The Jalaam Independent Blunderbuss;* in this review the supposititious editor compliments highly the work of his fellow-townsman, Hosea Biglow, and then adds that he would append a fragment of a pastoral from a manuscript copy loaned him by a friend, the title of which was "The Courtin'." The printer put in five stanzas, now numbers 2, 4, 5, 6, and

15 of the enlarged and completed poem, and then cut it off short because the page was full. The piece was interrupted just at that interesting stage where "His heart went pity-pat, But hern went pity Zekle." Naturally there were scores of requests from readers of the book for the remainder of the story. But Lowell had kept no copy and the printer had destroyed the original. So he patched up a conclusion, and in 1864 he enlarged the poem to its present form, saying, "I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed it by sketching in the characters and making a connected story." The *Biglow Papers* as a whole has been called Lowell's most original and permanent contribution to American literature, and Mr. Greenslet, the latest biographer of Lowell, says that "The Courtin'" is "perhaps the most nearly perfect of his poems."

EXPLANATORY:

328 : 16. *dresser.* A sideboard or cupboard. Compare *Evangeline*, line 205.

328 : 17. *crook-necks.* Crooked-necked gourds or squashes.

328 : 19. *queen's-arm.* An old-fashioned musket which Grandfather Young had brought back "busted" from the battle of Concord. See Emerson's "Concord Hymn," p. 105.

328 : 21. *coz.* Because.

328 : 25. *kingdom-come.* A homely dialect phrase meaning "like heaven."

328 : 27. *dogrose.* The wild or brier rose.

329 : 34. *squired 'em.* Attended or waited upon them.

329 : 36. *All is.* The fact, or whole truth, is.

329 : 43. *Ole Hunderd.* The tune usually sung to the long-meter doxology.

329 : 58. *sekle.* Sequel or outcome.

330 : 88. *Snowhid.* Hidden under the snow.

331 : 95. *was cried.* The formal engagement, or "bans," of a couple was formerly announced or "cried" at church.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Point out some of the best humorous passages in this poem. (2) What effect has the homely New England dialect? Would the poem have been as good written in correct or literary English? (3) What evidences of real poetic truth and sentiment lie underneath the homely dialect? (4) Are the characters drawn true to life? (5) Memorize the selection and recite it for the class. (This may be assigned to one or two members of the class. If desirable, stanzas 8 to 13 inclusive may be omitted from the recitation.)

A Fable for Critics (Lowell)

INTRODUCTORY:

This *jeu d'esprit* was thrown off at intervals during 1847 and 1848, largely for Lowell's own amusement. He was advised by some of those to whom he read parts of it to publish it, and he finally gave his rights in the piece to his friend C. F. Briggs, and it appeared anonymously toward the close of 1848. It is a mock-heroic or satiric poem of a humorous character, though Lowell himself said that the criticism in it was meant to be serious. It is by no means a great poem, but it is by far the cleverest and most original production of its kind in American literature, rivaling Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" in English literature, though written in a mood by no means so vengeful and caustic. The criticism is remarkably acute, and according to the verdict of time it has proved to be almost entirely correct. The poem has in it nearly two thousand lines, but since it suffers little by being excerpted, we have included here only such portions as are of interest to young readers in their study of our more prominent writers.

EXPLANATORY:

332 : 24. *Olympus . . . Exchange.* A hit at the combination of the philosopher and shrewd business man in Emerson.

332 : 27. *Plotinus-Montaigne.* Plotinus was a Greek philosopher, born in Egypt in the third century; Montaigne was a French essayist, born in Gascony in 1533. Emerson was a close student of both these writers.

332 : 46. *lecturer.* This means that the earth, not Emerson, though like him, was ninety-nine parts lecturer.

332 : 50. *post mortem.* After death; this means that Emerson serves up his material in a lifeless sort of style. Is the criticism just?

332 : 55. *Griswold.* Rufus W. Griswold was a conspicuous critic and editor of the time.

333 : 73. *Berkshire's hills.* In western Massachusetts where Bryant was born and reared.

333 : 74. *in loco*, etc. "At a given place (add 'by a given fireside' here) you may play the fool." In a previous passage *in loco desipere* was used; this explains the parenthetical "add *foco* here."

333 : 79. *Mr. Quivis.* Mr. Who-ever-you-please.

334 : 96. *Hesiod's staff.* In Thomas Cooke's translation of the Greek poet Hesiod's *Works and Days*, we read,

> Fools, blind to truth! Nor knows their erring soul
> How much the half is better than the whole.

334 : 108. *my Pythoness.* According to the plan of the whole poem it is Apollo speaking, and he refers to the Pythoness, or Pythia, the priestess who delivered the message from Apollo at his Oracle in Delphi.

334 : 121. *old what's-his-name.* Referring to Taillefer, a Norman bard and soldier who marched before William's army at the battle of Hastings, 1066, singing the song of Roland and tossing his sword in the air.

335 : 126. *Thor.* The Scandinavian god of war, etc., usually represented with a hammer.

335 : 127. *Anne haec*, etc. "Is this the coat of thy son?" George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, died in 1691. He made for himself a suit of leather. See Carlyle's interesting chapter on him in *Sartor Resartus.*

335 : 131. *Goliath.* See in I Samuel 17 the story of David and Goliath.

335 : 132. *Castaly's spring.* A spring on Mount Parnassus in Greece, sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

335 : 135. *The Voice.* Whittier attached himself to the cause of abolition long before it became popular. There is a playful double

meaning here, "The Voice" referring to the Quaker inward voice, or conscience, and the *Voices of Freedom*, Whittier's first volume of poems.

335 : 148. *rathe.* Early.

335 : 151. *a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck.* Referring to the combination of moralist and romancer in Hawthorne. The English Baptist preacher John Bunyan is the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress;* De la Motte Fouqué was a German poet and romance writer; Tieck was a German dramatist, poet, and writer of gloomy romances.

336 : 159. *good as a lord.* That is, he had earned the right to a lordship as well as had Scott.

336 : 163. *American Scott.* Cooper is still called the American Scott, but Lowell is right in implying that it is much to the American author's disadvantage.

336 : 167. *acquitting.* That is, acquitting Cooper of being the American Scott.

336 : 173. *Natty Bumpo.* Nathaniel Bumpo, or Bumppo, otherwise known as Hawk-eye, Deerslayer, Leatherstocking, the famous scout and woodsman in *The Pioneers* and the four other Leatherstocking romances by Cooper.

336 : 176. *Coffin.* Long Tom Coffin, the famous old sailor in *The Pilot.*

337 : 197. *Adams . . . Primrose.* Parson Abraham Adams, the simple, innocent, and yet courageous preacher in Henry Fielding's novel, *Joseph Andrews;* Dr. Charles Primrose, the title character in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield.*

337 : 198. *Barnaby Rudge.* The title character in one of Charles Dickens' novels. He was a shrewd, half-witted youth with a love for the wild life of London. He possessed a pet raven, and it was doubtless this fact that caused Lowell to associate Poe, the author of "The Raven," with him.

337 : 204. *Mathews.* Cornelius Mathews, a lawyer and voluminous contributor to the magazines about the middle of the nineteenth century.

337 : 217. *Collins and Gray.* William Collins and Thomas Gray, two eighteenth-century English poets.

337 : 223. *Melesigenes.* One of the names applied to Homer; he was so called because said by some to be the son of the god of the river Meles, near Smyrna, Asia Minor.

337 : 225. *I've heard the old blind man,* etc. Remember that it is Apollo speaking; hence he may claim to have heard Homer recite his own poems.

338 : 228. *Strauss.* An Austrian composer of light waltz music.

338 : 229. *Beethoven.* Ludwig von Beethoven is the greatest of the German musical composers.

338 : 231. *Theocritus.* A Greek pastoral poet of the third century before Christ.

338 : 241. *Cervantes.* Spanish poet and novelist, author of *Don Quixote.*

338 : 244. *having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes.* It happens that the lines containing the laugh at the American Raphaels and Dantes occur some ninety-odd lines farther down in the poem. Lowell doubtless rearranged the sequences later and forgot to correct this line.

338 : 247. *Dick Steele.* Richard Steele, who, with Joseph Addison, wrote many of the *Spectator* papers, including those on Sir Roger de Coverley.

338 : 251. *fine old English Gentleman.* Referring to Irving's portrait of the master of Bracebridge Hall in the *Sketch Book.*

339 : 262. *new Telegraph.* The first telegraph line was set up between Washington City and Baltimore in 1844.

339 : 263. *pricks down.* In the early Morse method of telegraphing, the messages were pricked in dots and dashes on paper.

339 : 269. *Campbell.* The English poet Thomas Campbell, author of "Ye Mariners of England" and other famous sea pieces. "The Tribute of Holmes to the grand Marseillaise" probably refers to his famous little poem "Old Ironsides."

339 : 273. *Bulwer's New Timon.* Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, author of many novels and several plays, published a satiric poem, "The New Timon," in 1846.

339 : 290. *last New Jerusalem.* That is, the latest moral or political reform.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Read the criticism of each of these authors in connection with your study of their works. (2) Which of the satiric sketches do you think is the best? (3) Do you agree with all of the criticism? Give some examples of what you think is unjust criticism. (4) The meter is anapestic tetrameter instead of the ordinary iambic pentameter used in heroic or satiric verse. This meter helps to give the whimsical and humorous tone so characteristic of the poem. For example take lines 49–50:

With the qui | et preci | sion of sci | ence he'll sort 'em,

But you can't | help suspect | ing the whole | a *post mortem.*

The peculiar rimes, many of them feminine and even three-syllabled, like *cabinet—dab in it*, *conjecture her—lecturer*, also add distinctly to this whimsical and playful tone. Point out some of the best (or worst) of these rimes.

Our Literature (Lowell)

INTRODUCTORY:

When Lowell was asked to respond to the toast "Our Literature" at the commemoration, on April 30, 1889, of the one hundredth anniversary of Washington's inauguration as President, he twice refused; but when Oliver Wendell Holmes and President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard importuned him to accept the invitation, he consented to break the silence to which he thought his advanced years entitled him. He was not satisfied with his effort, for the audience was so large that he could not make himself heard; but this short speech will illustrate the more serious style of Lowell's prose, and it is of special interest to students of American literature as the final word of our "Representative Man of Letters."

EXPLANATORY:

340 : 5. *the Psalmist's measure.* "The days of our years are three score years and ten" (Psalms 90:10).

341 : 58. *where was our literature.* For many years English critics taunted American writers with the query "Who reads an American book?" Irving's *Sketch Book* was the first serious answer to this query.

341 : 63. *vates sacer.* A sacred prophet, or poet.

342 : 86. *one precious book.* St. Augustine's *Confessions.*

342 : 89. *find swans in birds of quite another species.* An inverted or veiled allusion to Hans Christian Andersen's "The Ugly Duckling."

343 : 114. *low on the list of toasts.* Lowell came twelfth on the program and was followed only by Benjamin Harrison in the final toast on "America."

343 : 131. *old wives' tale.* An oral tradition or legend. *Wife* in this sense means simply an adult woman of the lower classes. Compare George Peele's drama, "An Old Wives' Tale."

344 : 141. "*Rejoice, O young man,*" etc. Ecclesiastes 11:9.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What introductory thoughts are expressed in paragraphs 1 and 2? (2) What three reasons are given why literature should be recognized on this anniversary? (3) What consolation does Lowell find in the foreign query as to where our literature was? (4) What reasons does he give as to why we could not suddenly develop a literature, and by what standards does he insist that we must judge our literature? (5) Why is literature the most powerful form of human expression? (6) What warning does the speaker utter in paragraphs 7 and 8? (7) What is Lowell's definition of literature? Memorize it. (8) Study the precision and clearness of the diction, the smoothness and easy rhythm of the well-rounded sentences, the distinct and well-articulated paragraph structure, and the general stylistic qualities of the whole speech.

Review of Hawthorne's Twice-told Tales (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

This review appeared in *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1842. In the previous month Poe had written a hasty notice of half a page, promising to review Hawthorne's stories in detail in the next number. Poe again reverted to Hawthorne's tales, quoting in an extended review published in *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1847, several of the salient paragraphs of this earlier review. The paragraph beginning "A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale" has become a sort of *locus classicus* for all short-story criticism. It was Irving and Hawthorne who wrote our first artistic short stories, but it was Poe who best understood the technique of this form, and the public now gives him credit for foreseeing the importance and greatly furthering the development of this modern art form. We reprint this characteristic book review as a type of a very familiar form of literary criticism, and one in which the student may exercise his own talent.

EXPLANATORY:

346 : 63. *a rhymed poem . . . perused in an hour.* Poe continued to stress this note in his address "On the Poetic Principle," published in *Sartain's Union Magazine*, October, 1850, saying, "I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase 'a long poem' is a flat contradiction in terms." This address repeats some parts of the present review almost verbatim.

347 : 84. *De Béranger.* Pierre Jean de Béranger, a French lyric poet; died 1857.

347 : 85. *immassive.* Lacking in mass; one of Poe's coinages.

347 : 90. *In medio tutissimus ibis.* "You will go most safely in the middle way."

348 : 132. *idea of the Beautiful.* In the address "On the Poetic Principle" Poe defined poetry as "the rhythmical creation of Beauty."

348 : 136. *tales of ratiocination.* That is, tales based on the principle of deductive reasoning. Poe's own tales, "The Gold Bug," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Purloined Letter," are the best examples of this type.

349 : 148. *par parenthèse.* By way of parenthesis. Poe was fond of the use of French and Latin phrases.

349 : 155. *Blackwood.* A literary magazine published at Edinburgh, Scotland.

349 : 167. *Mr. John Neal.* A minor American author; died 1876.

351 : 212. *caviare.* A Russian relish which is appreciated only by a cultivated taste; hence anything fine that is unappreciated by the vuglar crowd. See Shakespeare's use of the word in *Hamlet*, II: ii.

352 : 248. *resembles a plagiarism.* The joke is on Poe, for "Howe's Masquerade" first appeared in the *Democratic Review*, May, 1838; Poe's "William Wilson" first appeared in Burton's *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1839.

353 : 294. *a passage . . . of "William Wilson."* The parallel passage referred to is as follows: "'Scoundrel!' I said, in a voice husky with rage, while every syllable I uttered seemed as new fuel to my fury; 'scoundrel! imposter! accursed villain! You shall not—you shall not dog me unto death! Follow me, or I stab you where you stand!'" Do you think there is much resemblance between the passages quoted?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) A good book review may contain a survey of the content and division and analysis of it, some general estimate of the form in which the work is cast, specific criticism of what is good and bad, and a summary of the author's merits and defects. Has Poe followed this plan? Point out the divisions of his review. (2) What paragraphs would you select as the most valuable in this essay? Give your reasons. (3) In this review Poe lays down more fully than elsewhere the principles of short-story writing. Work these out into a definite usable plan, giving specific quotations to support your points. [Suggestion: (*a*) The author of a short story must definitely plan his story to produce a preconceived effect; (*b*) this must be a unique or single effect, so as to produce perfect unity or totality of impression; (*c*) the story must not be too long nor too short, or else it will defeat its own end of creating a pleasurable sensation; (*d*) it

must show originality, invention, imagination.] (4) Read a story by Hawthorne, preferably one mentioned in this review, and apply these principles to its construction, in order to determine how far Hawthorne fulfills the requirements laid down by Poe. (5) Suggested composition assignment: Write a review of some modern novel or some collection of short stories.

The Fall of The House of Usher (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

This famous story first appeared in Burton's *Gentleman's Magazine*, September, 1839, and was included at the end of the same year in *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque.* All in all, it is perhaps the most perfect of Poe's impressionistic stories. It certainly exemplifies most admirably Poe's theory of the short story as expressed in his "Review of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*" (see page 345).

EXPLANATORY:

353. *Son cœur*, etc. "His heart is a suspended lute, which resounds the moment it is touched." Béranger was a French lyric poet of the early nineteenth century. The quotation has not been located, and it is thought that Poe may have deliberately invented the lines to suit his own purposes in the story.

354 : 37. *tarn.* An archaic or provincial word meaning a mountain lake or pool. What is the effect of the use of this unusual word? Note how often Poe repeats it throughout the story.

358 : 166. *ennuyé.* A French word meaning bored, oppressed with a feeling of weariness.

359 : 192. *arabesque.* Fanciful, like the rich ornamentation of the Arabian style of architecture.

362 : 306. *Von Weber.* A noted German musical composer, who died in 1826.

362 : 320. *Fuseli.* A Swiss painter whose pictures were mainly of a strange, fantastical, romantic type.

363 : 352. "*The Haunted Palace.*" Poe had published this poem separately in *The Baltimore Museum* for April, 1839, five months before the appearance of "The Fall of the House of Usher." Note the appropriateness of assigning the composition of this allegorical fantasy to Roderick Usher.

364 : 375. *Porphyrogene.* The name of the monarch Thought, the lord of the palace. Literally the word means "born to the purple, regal." It should be here pronounced por-fī′-rō-gēn for the sake of the rime and meter.

364 : 395. *red-litten.* Litten is a form of the participle invented by Poe, doubtless for archaic effect. The "red-litten windows" are the blood-shot eyes. Compare "two luminous windows," above.

365 : 407. *sentience of all vegetable things.* The theory that plants and inanimate things have feelings somewhat like animals. Poe's footnote is one of the intentional touches of learned pedantry to indicate the strange and out-of-the-way character of Usher's reading.

365 : 433. *Ververt and Chartreuse of Gresset*, etc. Though nearly all of these allusions have been identified, it is needless for the young student to puzzle over the list of strange and unfamiliar books and

authors here given. The student should note, however, that Poe has intentionally introduced these unusual titles to heighten the effect of strangeness and uncanniness and to emphasize strongly the peculiar bent of Usher's mentality.

367 : 475. *donjon-keep.* A dungeon in which prisoners were sometimes confined and tortured. Note Poe's intentional use of the archaic and unusual spelling. Why?

370 : 592. "*Mad Trist.*" The title of this imaginary work by an imaginary novelist is suggestive of the fatal meeting of the two insane Ushers on the threshold of the room at the end of the story.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does Poe create in the opening paragraph the atmosphere or dominant tone of his story? What is this tone? (2) Mark the words and phrases which emphasize or enhance this tone. Note particularly the repeated phrase "vacant and eye-like windows." Does this phrase suggest any parallelism with Usher's personal appearance and mental state. (3) How does the visitor explain his presence near the house? Does Poe intend for the reader to identify himself with the visitor? (4) Why is the black and lurid tarn made prominent? Note especially that Poe uses the tarn to give a reflected picture of the house in its depths. Does this suggest the final disposition of the house at the end of the story? (5) In the fourth paragraph the special emotion which Poe intends to arouse in the reader is mentioned. What is it? Does the author tell you here the cause of the emotion of fear in Usher? Why?. (6) Why does Poe emphasize here the peculiar atmosphere which seemed to envelop the old house? (7) How is the decayed character of the mansion further developed in the fifth paragraph? (8) What is the importance of mentioning here the "barely perceptible fissure" in the old building? (9) What significant hints concerning the doctor and the valet are given? Is the doctor needed in the later developments of the story? (10) Describe the furniture and general appearance of Usher's study. How do these details enhance the general effect of mystery and fear? (11) So far (through the seventh paragraph), what has the author done for his story? What follows next? (12) Do you get a vivid picture of Roderick Usher when he first appears? Reproduce in your own words as much of Poe's description as you can recall. (13) What particular evidences are given of Usher's disturbed or diseased state of mind? (14) Why does Poe speak specifically of Usher's "morbid acuteness of the senses"? (15) What is the artistic value of Usher's speech beginning "I shall perish"? At this point does Poe clearly state or merely suggest the tragic conclusion of the story? (16) How is the gloomy shadow of the old house woven in with Usher's mental condition? (17) Why does Poe so carefully develop the idea that Usher and his sister Madeline are the only surviving members of the family of Usher? What significance is there in the fact that they are twins? (18) What is the effect of having Madeline appear in the distance and pass slowly out of view instead of having her formally introduced to the visitor? (19) What is the most significant detail given concerning lady Madeline's strange malady? (20) How did the two friends spend their time together in the old house? Do the kinds of music, painting, books, and authors mentioned add anything of value to the story? (21) Upon what

singular picture had Usher expended his artistic talent? Why? (22) What is the artistic value of the introduction of the allegorical poem called "The Haunted Palace"? (23) Read the poem aloud in your best manner and interpret the allegory. Note that the palace is in reality a human face or head, representing a strong intellect (first four stanzas) which has been attacked by disease or insanity (last two stanzas). (24) Can you make an application of this poem to Poe's own life as well as to Usher's? (25) Why does the author announce lady Madeline's death briefly instead of describing it fully? (26) Why was the body temporarily entombed in the donjon-keep inside of the old house? (27) Do you see any value in describing the vault rather than the ceremony of lady Madeline's interment? (28) What significant details are brought out in the description of lady Madeline as she lay in her coffin? (29) After an interval of a few days what change came in Usher's habits? Can you account for his peculiar nervousness, uneasiness, and vacant staring? (30) What effect had all this upon the visitor? Do you share the visitor's feelings as you read? (31) On the eighth night after the temporary burial what led the visitor to rise and dress late in the night? The main action of the story may be said to begin here. (32) What is the artistic value of the storm? (33) Just what did you expect to appear when the window was opened and the wind rushed furiously in? (34) Why does the visitor insist on reading to Usher during the terrible storm? (35) How are the supposed quotations from the "Mad Trist" made to coincide with the situation as developed in our story? (36) Do you guess the cause of each interruption in the reading? Why does the author not indicate more clearly the actual cause of these sounds? (37) Is Usher's final speech the climax of the story? Read it in your best style. (38) In the last two paragraphs the story is brought swiftly to a satisfactory close. Just what details are most impressive in these paragraphs? What time is indicated in the "full, setting, and blood-red moon"? (39) Is the final picture one of great imaginative beauty? Just what effect does this picture leave on your mind? (40) In what double sense do you interpret the title of the story? (41) Apply Poe's own theory of the short story to "The Fall of the House of Usher." (See his criticism of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*, page 345.) (42) Compare the amount of conversation in this story with that in "The Cask of Amontillado." Which of the two stories do you admire more, and why?

The Cask of Amontillado (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

This story was first published in *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1846. It is one of Poe's latest and most perfect horror stories. In a very brief space it presents to us an unforgettable picture of Italian family pride with its implacable spirit of revenge.

EXPLANATORY:

375 : 37. *pipe.* A large cask; in modern liquid measure, 126 gallons.

375 : 37. *Amontillado.* A fine, light-colored Spanish sherry.

376 : 68. *roquelaure.* A short cloak; so called from the Duc de Roquelaure; pronounced rōk-lôr′.

376 : 70. *palazzo.* Italian for "palace"; pronounced pä-lä′-tzō.

377 : 109. *Medoc.* A kind of French wine.

378 : 123. *foot d'or . . . serpent rampant.* A golden foot on a blue background, crushing a springing serpent.

378 : 126. *Nemo me impune lacessit.* "No one wounds me with impunity."

378 : 130. *puncheons.* Large casks, containing 72 gallons at least.

378 : 140. *De Grave.* Presumably a strong Italian wine.

Look up the following words if you do not already know their meaning: *impunity, immolation, connoisseurship, virtuoso, sconces, flambeaux, catacombs, rheum, crypt.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What problem does Poe set himself in this story? (2) Does he state the problem promptly and move swiftly to the action, or does he approach his theme leisurely? (3) Why is so much made of the smile? Of Fortunato's skill in judging wine? (4) What is the advantage of choosing the carnival season for the setting? Consider particularly the irony of Fortunato's costume. (5) What is the advantage of introducing Luchesi's name? How many times is it repeated and at what points in the story? (6) Do Montresor's servants act in accord with the general spirit of duplicity and insincerity of the Italian character? (7) When is Fortunato's cap and bells first mentioned? When is it first made to jingle? At what points and with what effect is the jingle of the bells repeated? (8) Why does Montresor continually suggest that they go back? (9) Why is the drinking of the wine introduced? Does Montresor drink as much as Fortunato? (10) What irony is there in Montresor's toast? (11) Describe Montresor's coat-of-arms, and then interpret it in terms of the story; that is, tell whom the foot and snake represent, etc. (12) What advantage is gained by the constant allusion to the nitre? To the bones of the dead buried there? (13) By what device is the mason's trowel first introduced? (14) Just how is the victim caught in the niche? (15) What tone is exhibited in Montresor's final plea that they return? What irony is expressed in the "little attentions" which he promised Fortunato? (16) Describe the walling up of the tomb. What effect did it have on Fortunato? (17) How does Montresor stop his victim from screaming? (18) In the final laugh and words of Fortunato is he drunk or sober, sane or insane? (Be careful to decide this question with relation to the problem as set down in the first paragraph of the story.) (19) How do such stories affect you? Do you feel the artistic power of this one? (20) Are the characters clearly portrayed? Give your concept of them. (21) Note how much of the action is presented by conversation. Is this easy to do? Is it artistic? (22) Apply to this story Poe's tests of the short story as set forth in his criticism of Hawthorne's *Twice-told Tales.* (23) Is there any moral purpose to this story? Does this add to or detract from its artistic force?

The Purloined Letter (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

"The Purloined Letter" first appeared in *The Gift* for 1845. It was not the first of Poe's detective stories in which M. Dupin figured.

"The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" having preceded it; but it is more pleasant than the others to read. In its emotional power it is not to be compared with Poe's best horror tales, such as "The Fall of the House of Usher," but it illustrates a distinctive type and is well worth studying as an example of what Poe called stories of ratiocination.

EXPLANATORY:

382. *Nil sapientiæ*, etc. "There is nothing more hateful to wisdom than too much cleverness." Seneca was a Roman tragic poet and prose writer of the first century.

382 : 4. *au troisième*, etc. On the third (that is, the fourth according to American counting) floor of 33 Donot Street in Faubourg St. Germain (a part of Paris).

382 : 12. *Rue Morgue . . . Marie Rogêt.* A reference to Poe's two other famous detective stories. Read them if possible.

382 : 16. *Monsieur G ——, the Prefect.* Chief of police. Note how Poe uses initials, dashes, etc., to give an air of truth or actuality. This device is rarely used by modern writers of fiction.

386 : 140. *minister's hotel.* That is, his official residence.

386 : 144. *au fait.* Informed as to fact.

391 : 316. *Abernethy.* An English surgeon; died 1831.

391 : 345. *escritoire.* French for "writing-desk."

392 : 372. *Procrustean bed.* Look up this familiar allusion.

393 : 416. *Rochefoucauld*, etc. François La Rochefoucauld, a French epigrammatist; died 1680. Jean de *La Bruyère*, a French moralist; died 1696. Niccolo *Machiavelli*, an Italian diplomat and political writer; died 1527. Tommaso *Campanella*, an Italian writer; died 1639.

394 : 452. *recherchés.* French for "carefully sought out, well hidden." The singular form *recherché* is used just below.

395 : 473. *non distributio medii.* A term in logic indicating the fallacy of "the undistributed middle." Because all fools are poets, it does not follow that all poets are fools, nor that this particular poet, Minister D ——, is a fool.

395 : 480. *poet and mathematician.* Poe was himself both a poet and a good mathematician.

395 : 488. "*Il y a à parier*," etc. "It is a good wager that every public idea, every accepted convention, is a piece of stupidity, since it is received by the greater number of people." Sebastien Chamfort, a French epigrammatist; died 1794.

396 : 499. '*ambitus*,' etc. In Latin *ambitus* means literally, walking around, as in seeking an office; *religio*, from *re-*, back, + *ligare*, bind; *homines honesti*, distinguished men.

396 : 506. *The mathematics are.* We would now say "mathematics is."

396 : 525. *Bryant.* Jacob Bryant, English antiquarian, author of *A New System* or *An Analysis of Ancient Mythology;* died 1804.

397 : 549. *intrigant.* Intriguer.

398 : 584. *vis inertiæ.* Force of inertia.

401 : 692. *the letter had been turned.* To understand the context here, the student should be reminded that the letter was a large double sheet, and that the address was written on the back and the letter

then sealed with wax. The gummed envelope had not come into use in Poe's day.

402 : 733. *facilis descensus Averni.* "Easy is the descent into Avernus." Avernus is a volcanic lake near Naples, Italy, once supposed to be the gate to Hades, or the lower regions.

402 : 734. *Catalani.* Angelica Catalani, a noted Italian singer; died 1849.

402 : 737. *monstrum horrendum.* Horrible monster. Used in Vergil's *Aeneid*, Book III, line 658.

403 : 750. *MS.* Manuscript. The derivative meaning, writing by hand, or handwriting, is here intended.

403 : 752. "*Un dessein*," etc. "A design so wicked, if not worthy of Atreus, is worthy of Thyestes." The classical story of Atreus and Thyestes relates how two brothers became deadly enemies and strove to take vengeance on each other.

403 : 754. *Crébillon's Atrée.* Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon was a French poet, author of the tragedy *Atrée et Thyeste* here referred to.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does Poe connect this story with the two other detective stories in which M. Dupin played the leading rôle? (2) What is the main purpose of the conversation with the Prefect at the opening of the story? (3) In what way is the solution of the problem hinted at by Dupin? (4) Why does Poe make the Prefect laugh so heartily? Is this laugh reverted to again in the story? (5) Explain the problem as outlined by the Prefect. (6) Enumerate his exploits in search of the purloined letter. In this connection explain the Latin motto used as a headpiece for the story. (7) Why does the Prefect visit Dupin the second time? Is Dupin's anecdote of the English surgeon, Dr. Abernethy, apropos? (8) What is the effect on the reader and on the characters of Dupin's sudden proposal to produce the letter? (9) Into what two distinct parts is the story divided, and just where is the point of division? (10) Which is more interesting, the first part or the second? Why? (11) Why does Dupin begin his explanation of how he got the letter with an analysis of the methods of the Parisian police? (12) Why is it necessary to analyze Minister D——'s character so fully? (13) Why did Poe make so much of the relation between mathematics and poetry? (14) Does all this learned talk give you an exalted opinion of Dupin's intellectual acuteness? Enumerate some of the points he makes about the adaptation of mathematical axioms to other realms of thought, the law of inertia, the psychology of advertising and of solving guessing games, etc. (15) Relate just how Dupin discovered and obtained the letter. (16) What astute trick did Dupin play on Minister D—— by the inscription he put inside the facsimile letter, and why did he do it? (17) Compare this story with "The Cask of Amontillado." Which is the more interesting? Which the more artistic? Which appeals more to the emotions, and which more to the intellect? (18) Apply to this story Poe's own test of what a short story should be, p. 348. (19) Suggested subjects for compositions: A Comparison of A. Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes with Poe's C. Auguste Dupin; Poe's Short Stories by Types; Poe's Influence on Modern Short-Story Writers; Why I Like Poe's Tales.

To Science (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

Poe wrote few sonnets, preferring usually to make up his own verse forms rather than confine himself to established artificial forms like the sonnet. "To Science," however, has been singled out as one of the very finest of the irregular or Shakespearean sonnets produced in America. It first appeared without title as a sort of prelude to the volume *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Other Poems* (1829). It was afterward printed separately in slightly revised forms in all later editions of Poe's poems, and was republished in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, May, 1836, under the title "Sonnet." The preferred text is that of the 1845 edition of Poe's *The Raven and Other Poems.*

EXPLANATORY:

403 : 3–4. *Why preyest thou . . . vulture.* An allusion to the punishment of Prometheus. Tell the story.

403 : 9. *Diana.* The Roman goddess of the moon, chastity, and the chase. She is usually represented as seated in a bright car with a silver crescent in her hair and a quiver with a bow and arrows at her back.

403 : 10. *Hamadryad.* A wood nymph, the spirit of a tree.

403 : 12. *Naiad.* A water nymph, the spirit of a spring or stream. In what sense is *flood* used?

403 : 13. *Elfin.* A poetical form of *elf*, a kind of fairy.

403 : 14. *tamarind.* A tree of India and other tropical countries, bearing a pleasing bean-like fruit.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Is there a single well-unified thought in this sonnet? State it in your own words. Where is it first set forth in the sonnet? (2) How is science personified in the first two lines? In the third and fourth lines what picture is suggested? (3) How is the theme developed in the second quatrain? (4) What effects of science are given in the third quatrain? (5) How is the thought of the poem clinched in the final couplet? Notice how the last line returns to the opening thought, thus rounding out the sonnet. (6) In the earliest form of the poem "shrubbery" was used where "tamarind tree" now occurs. Explain why the change is a distinct improvement. (7) This sonnet is written on the irregular or Shakespearean model. Consult the paragraph on the sonnet, in the section on English metrics, and work out carefully the rime scheme of Poe's sonnet. (8) Compare this sonnet with the regular or Italian model used in Longfellow's "Divina Commedia," p. 241, and the partial Italian model used in Hayne's "Composed in Autumn," p. 419.

To Helen (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is thought to be one of Poe's earliest poems. It was first printed in what is known as the "second edition" of his poems, in 1831, but it is supposed to have been written much earlier, according to some even in Poe's fourteenth year. Mrs. Jane Craig Stanard, of Richmond, the mother of one of Poe's schoolmates, was doubtless the inspiration of the poem. She was a beautiful, gentle, gracious woman, and when on one occasion she spoke tenderly to Poe there sprang up in his soul what he called his first purely ideal love. Poe made several later revisions in the text, and in its final form the poem has been singled out as one of the finest pure lyrics in the language.

EXPLANATORY:

403 : 2. *Nicéan barks.* Nicéan may refer to the ancient Greek city and empire in Asia Minor. Professor W. P. Trent suggests that this obscure allusion may be intended for the Phæacian barks by which the wandering Ulysses was carried to his native shores.

404 : 7. *hyacinth.* Dark. See Poe's use of the word *hyacinthine* in the second paragraph of "Ligeia" to describe the Lady Ligeia's raven-black hair.

404 : 8. *Naiad.* The Naiads were represented in Greek mythology as lovely nymphs, the guardian spirits of fountains, rivers, etc.

404 : 9. *To the glory*, etc. These two lines show Poe's wonderful power of poetical condensation. They are perhaps the most frequently quoted lines in all his poetry.

404 : 14. *Psyche.* The Greeks personified the human soul as a beautiful maiden named Psyche, beloved of Cupid, the god of love.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Give the thought of the poem by stanzas. (2) What is the primary emotion expressed? (3) Why is this poem classed as one of the finest of Poe's pure lyrics? (4) Does it carry out Poe's dictum that poetry is the rhythmical creation of beauty? (5) The rhythm is iambic and the meter four-stressed for most of the lines, but there are many artistic variations, especially in the last lines of the stanzas. Note also that the rime scheme constantly varies. What is the general effect of all these irregularities? (6) Read the poem aloud a number of times, visualizing the images and re-creating the emotion as vividly as possible. It would be well to memorize the stanzas as a sort of measuring-rod for pure lyrical expression.

Israfel (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem also appeared in the 1831 edition of Poe's poems. According to the poet's habit, the piece was revised and republished from time to time during his life. Edmund Clarence Stedman says of this poem: "Of all these lyrics is not this the most lyrical, — not only charged with music, but with light? For once, and in his freest hour of youth, Poe got above the sepulchres and mists, even beyond the pale-faced moon, and visited the empyrean. There is joy in this carol, and the radiance of the skies, and ecstatic possession of the gift of song. . . . If I had any claim to make up a 'Parnassus,' not perhaps of the most famous English lyrics, but of those which appeal strongly to my own poetic sense, and could select but one of Poe's, I confess that I should choose 'Israfel' for pure music, for exaltation, and for its original, satisfying quality of rhythmic art."

EXPLANATORY:

404. *Israfel.* In the Koran, the Mohammedan holy book, Israfel is called the angel of music. The quotation used by Poe as a motto was taken from Thomas Moore's *Lalla Rookh;* Moore got it from Sale's *Preliminary Discourse* on the Koran, rather than from the Koran itself. Poe, who frequently tampered with his quotations, has added the words "whose heart-strings are a lute" from his own poem.

404 : 5. *giddy stars.* Trembling, wavering. *Giddy* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *giddian,* to sing, to be merry. Poe may be using the word here with some implication of this original meaning.

404 : 12. *levin.* The Middle English word for lightning.

404 : 13. *Pleiads.* The so-called seven stars in the constellation Taurus. Only six of the stars are ordinarily visible to the naked eye; hence the legend of the lost Pleiad, which Poe reverts to here by saying "which were seven." The poet calls them rapid, doubtless because of their apparently quick ascent of the meridian.

405 : 26. *Houri.* A houri was one of the beautiful and immortal maidens who, according to Mohammedan belief, attend the spirits of the dead in paradise.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why are the stars said to become mute when Israfel sings? (2) What is the force of the epithet *enamored,* line 10? (3) What is the real cause of Israfel's wonderful power? Does Poe use his own heartstrings as a lute, that is, does he put his own emotions into his lyrics? (4) What images of heaven does Poe present in this song? (5) What is the thought of the last stanza? Does it seem egotistic? (6) Compare the poem with Shelley's "Skylark," particularly the last stanzas of each poem. (7) Note again the irregularity of the metrical and stanzaic forms. Poe seems to follow the impulses of his own genius rather than the established forms of lyrical verse.

Ulalume (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Ulalume," one of Poe's latest and most original poems, was first published in the *American Whig Review,* December, 1847. Virginia Clemm Poe, his child wife, died in this year, and it is well known that Poe was never quite himself after this staggering blow. He had several romantic friendships after Virginia's death, the most prominent being that with Mrs. Sarah H. Whitman, whom, according to her own story, he frantically besought to marry him. The most probable interpretation of "Ulalume" is that it represents the poet's temporary fancy of allowing another love to take the place of his devotion to Virginia. Some have held that the poem is not to be interpreted personally, but impersonally as the poet's devotion to that ideal beauty which he loved and had lost, but which he never ceased to yearn for. At best it is exceedingly mystical and intangible in its intellectual or thought content, but its lyrical appeal is distinctly felt by all readers who have any ear for original and haunting poetic melody. The strange names of places are mere musical coinages to fit the rime and rhythm of the poem. In this respect it may be compared with Coleridge's "Kubla Khan."

EXPLANATORY:

406 : 4. *lonesome October.* Virginia Poe died on January 30, but Poe prefers to place the anniversary of her death in October because that melancholy month better suits his purposes in this poem.

406 : 5. *immemorial year.* That is, because of its record of deep sorrow this year seemed to reach back beyond memory.

406 : 10. *Titanic.* Poe uses the capital *T* here, thus indicating his conscious reference to the Titans, the giants whom the gods on Mount Olympus overthrew.

406 : 12. *Psyche.* Poe was fond of personifying the soul thus. See "To Helen," line 14.

406 : 14. *scoriac rivers.* Rivers of lava. Poe apparently coined the adjective from *scoria*, the slag or dross from melted metal.

406 : 19. *boreal pole.* According to the *Standard Dictionary*, which quotes Poe's line in illustration, this means either the north pole or the south pole. Which did Poe probably have in mind?

406 : 25. *night of all nights.* The anniversary of the death of his beloved. See lines 86 and 89 in corroboration.

406 : 28. *tarn.* Pool, lake; a favorite word with Poe.

406 : 29. *ghoul-haunted.* Ghouls were anciently supposed to rob graves and eat corpses. This is another favorite Poe word.

406 : 30. *senescent.* Growing late; literally, growing old, from Latin *senex*, old.

407 : 37. *Astarte's bediamonded crescent.* Astarte was the Assyrian and Phœnician goddess of the moon, and was usually represented with a crescent or new moon. Note Poe's beautiful imagery here.

407 : 39. *Dian.* Diana, the Roman goddess of the moon, the chase, and chastity.

407 : 44. *the Lion.* The constellation Leo, the fifth sign of the zodiac.

407 : 46. *Lethean.* Causing forgetfulness. Lethe is the river of oblivion in Hades.

408 : 64. *Sibyllic.* Prophetic. In classical mythology the Sibyls are women endowed with prophetic powers.

408 : 77. *legended tomb.* Having a legend inscribed on it.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the tone of this poem? (2) Make a list of the principal words and phrases which help to intensify this tone. Have the selection of the time of year and the strange proper names anything to do with the dominant tone? (3) How do you interpret the poet's companion, Psyche? (4) What is the theme of the poem? (5) Make an outline showing the development of the theme. (Suggestion: the setting; mood or state of mind of the lover; the talk with Psyche; the rising of Astarte; Psyche's warning and fearful distress; the calming of Psyche's fears; the tomb of Ulalume; the effect of the memory of her death.) (6) If the rising of Astarte with her crescent, or new moon, means Poe's new love, whom does Dian represent? (7) Could the Lion be taken as the symbolic guardian of the poet's heart? (8) Interpret Psyche's mistrust and fearful distress. (9) How did the poet quiet her fears? (10) What do you think is the full meaning of "tempted her out of her gloom" and "conquered her scruples"? If Poe was trying to make up his mind to marry, what finally stopped

him from doing so? (11) Show why the last stanza is a satisfactory and artistic close. (Note how it reverts to the opening lines, and how it reëchoes parts of the first and third stanzas almost verbatim.) (12) The stanzas range from nine to thirteen lines of three-stressed anapestic rhythm. Scan one or two stanzas, noting any variations or irregularities that occur. (13) Study the rime scheme. Is the model consistently followed? Notice that each stanza is made on two riming sounds, one feminine and one masculine. (14) What repetition and refrain effects do you notice?

Eldorado (Poe)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Eldorado" is one of Poe's latest poems, appearing first in *Flag of Our Country*, April 21, 1849.

EXPLANATORY:

409 : 6. *Eldorado.* From two Spanish words, *el*, the, and *dorado*, gilded, the name of a fictitious city or country of fabulous gold supposed by the Spaniards to be located somewhere in central South America. Poe uses it as a symbol for the unattainable ideal or aspiration of the human spirit.

409 : 21. *Valley of the Shadow.* Referring to Psalms 23:4, and implying that the ideal is reached only after death.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What stages of life do you find recorded in the four stanzas? Make a statement of the theme of the poem, and outline it by giving a topic for each of the stanzas. (2) Give details showing the changing mood and appearance of the knight from stanza to stanza. (3) What is symbolized by the "pilgrim shadow" or "shade"? (4) Give your interpretation of the meaning of the "Mountains of the Moon" and the "Valley of the Shadow." (5) Is there a note of resolution or courage in the last stanza? (6) Apply the thought of the poem to Poe's poetical aspirations. (7) Apply it to your own aspirations. Can you draw a lesson from the poem for your own guidance in life? (8) Compare the poem with Longfellow's "Excelsior." (9) Analyze the meter and stanzaic form, noting all irregularities and their effect on the quality of the verse.

Storm and Calm (Timrod)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Storm and Calm" was included in the "Additional Poems" of the edition of Timrod's *Poems* published in 1873. It probably first appeared in some one of the newspapers with which Timrod was connected. It is a fine, vigorous poem for young readers to study. Nothing could better illustrate the doctrine of struggle against adversity, and the mystery of suffering out of which comes great character, than Timrod's own checkered life.

EXPLANATORY:

410 : 1. *South.* The south wind, which with its soft, warm zephyrs is supposed to bring the balmy days of spring.

410 : 9. *North.* The north wind, whose fierce wintry blasts bring storms and cold.

410 : 15. *berg . . . floe.* The iceberg and the flat mass of floating polar ice. Note the imaginative quality of this line.

410 : 18. *fiend.* Evil spirit, devil. *Shrouds* is another word for sails. Why is it effective here?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Point out the two contrasting sections of the poem, and give the main thought in each. (2) Which part receives more emphasis? Why? The main theme is cast in the form of an apostrophe to the fierce spirit of the north wind. With this thought in mind, we might analyze the poem as consisting of an introductory thought of calm, typified in the gentle south wind; the body of the poem, a cry to the fierce spirit of the north wind, in which is set forth the doctrine of struggle and suffering as the source of strong human character; and a brief reversion to the introductory thought in the two concluding lines. (3) Now study each stanza in detail, marking the emphatic words and strongest and most suggestive lines. (4) By what means does the poet suggest the soft, luxurious tone of the first division? (5) Explain fully the thought in stanza 2. (6) Note the change of tone in the opening of stanza 3. What is the effect of the change? (7) From this point on to the end of the poem count the lines that open with a strong imperative word. This requires an inversion of the rhythm, and great emphasis is thus gained. (8) Explain the figurative expression in lines 11 and 12. (9) What is the force of *Arctic* in line 17? How long is the arctic night? (10) Point out some of the facts of Timrod's life that seem to verify the teaching of this poem. (11) The metrical form of these verses is simple but very effective. The rhythm is iambic, but there are numerous inversions in the first foot to throw strong emphasis on the opening syllable, which is usually a monosyllabic word in the imperative mood. Point out these inversions. (12) What is the effect of the triplet rime in the last stanza? (13) Can you point out two slightly false rimes?

Carolina (Timrod)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was composed in 1861 and published widely in Southern newspapers in the early years of the Civil War. Among the martial songs of our Southern literature there is none that surpasses "Carolina" in depth of patriotic sentiment and fineness of artistic quality. The poem celebrates the spirit of Timrod's native state, and the poet's friend Paul Hamilton Hayne has said that the "lines are destined perhaps to outlive the vitality of the state whose antique fame they celebrate."

EXPLANATORY:

411 : 1. *despot.* The Federal soldier. Compare *Huns*, line 45.

412 : 27. *Eutaw's battle-bed.* In the Revolutionary battle fought at

Eutaw Springs in 1781, the Continentals under General Greene defeated the British under General Stewart. Name several other Revolutionary battles fought in South Carolina.

412 : 31. *Rutledge . . . Laurens.* John Rutledge, born in Charleston in 1739, was elected president of South Carolina in 1776, and governor in 1779. He was one of the most famous of Southern statesmen. Colonel John Laurens, a youthful and gallant Carolinian, was killed at the head of his regiment in a battle at Combahee, South Carolina, in 1782.

412 : 34. *Marion's bugle-blast.* The famous partisan leader Francis Marion, known as the "Swamp Fox," was in the battle of Eutaw Springs, in 1781.

412 : 45. *Huns.* The Huns were the fiercest of the ruthless barbarian tribes who swept down on Rome from the fastnesses of northern Germany. Here the allusion is to the Federal soldiers.

412 : 46. *festal guns.* Guns fired in joyous or festive salutation.

412 : 50. *Sachem's Head to Sumter's wall.* Sachem's Head is probably another name for Cæsar's Head, a peak in the Blue Ridge range in the extreme northwestern part of South Carolina. Fort Sumter is the famous naval fort in Charleston Harbor in the southeastern portion of the state.

413 : 79. *armorial trees.* The coat of arms of South Carolina bears a palm tree.

413 : 81. *gauntlet.* A leathern glove covered with steel plates as a part of the armor covering the hand; throwing down the gauntlet is a challenge to battle.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the purpose of such a lyric as this? (2) In what form is the poem cast? (In answering this question, note the continual use of the nominative of address, "Carolina," throughout the poem.) (3) The poem may be divided into two movements with a conclusion. The first three stanzas set forth the appeal; the fourth, fifth, and sixth indicate the answer that the people of the state will make to this appeal, and the seventh stanza prophesies or suggests the complete triumph of the cause for which the poet pleads. Taking this analysis as suggestive, give proper topics for each of the seven stanzas. (4) Why does the poet begin with a description of Carolina in the hands of her enemies? (5) What does the poet mean by "lances of the palm," and "a spot . . . on thy garment's rim"? (6) Interpret line 18. (7) What sentiment is set forth in the third stanza? Had Carolina taken a worthy part in Revolutionary history? Give some of the facts. (8) Why does the poet begin in stanza 4 with the murmur of the waves and the swell of the ocean? (9) Stanza 5 shows the ready answer of the people to the call to arms. Explain the figurative language in lines 57–59. (10) In stanza 6 the poet suggests that Carolina may be crushed but never conquered. Explain the thought in lines 65–72 concerning the women and children of the state. (11) The bold and vigorous conclusion indicates that no power shall be able to quell the indomitable will of the sons of Carolina. The outcome of the war literally disproved this prophecy, but the spirit of the poem still strongly stirs our souls. Read the poem through again with this thought in mind. (12) Study now the form of the

verse. Notice the three triplets of four-stress lines in iambic meter, with the one-word refrain of two trochaic feet repeated after each triplet. Perhaps Timrod received a suggestion from Tennyson's "The Ballad of Oriana," the first stanza of which reads:

> My heart is wasted with my woe,
> Oriana.
> There is no rest for me below,
> Oriana.
> When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with snow,
> And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,
> Oriana,
> Alone I wander to and fro,
> Oriana.

Timrod's arrangement seems equally artistic and musical. In fact, there is not a false rime or halting line in the whole poem. Though simple and chaste in language, the lines are full of the fire and intense passion of patriotism.

Spring (Timrod)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was written in 1862, the first year of the Civil War. It indicates the direction Timrod's genius was taking and gives us some hint of what he might have accomplished in poetry had not the war hastened his decline in health and fortune. The last five stanzas show the state of mind of the poet and the people of the South toward an army of invasion from the North. At the close of the terrible struggle, Timrod, though broken in health and spirit, could still write encouragingly to his fellow-citizens, "Spring is the true Reconstructionist,—a reconstructionist in the best and most practical sense. There is not a nook in the land in which she is not at this moment exerting her influence in preparing a way for the restoration of the South."

EXPLANATORY:

414 : 5. *jasmine.* This is the yellow jasmine, one of the sweetest of all southern wild flowers.

414 : 26. *azure gems.* This refers to the tiny little bluets which spring up all over the South in the early spring.

415 : 35. *enamored South.* That is, the South Wind in love with the flowers.

415 : 47. *Dryad.* A spirit or wood nymph whose life is bound up with that of a tree.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In what tone or mood is the first movement of the poem written? The second? (2) Do you think the two lyric motifs in the poem are successfully blended or do you think the lyric unity would have been better if the last five stanzas had been omitted? (3) What do you understand by "nameless pathos"? (4) Explain the figurative expressions in the second stanza. What do you think of this stanza as to its poetic quality, especially in its appeal to the esthetic sense? (5) In plain prose we say that the sap rises in the trees in the early spring. How does Timrod express this poetically? (6) How does

he present the coloring of the maple and the elm buds? (7) What use does he suggest for the bluets? (8) What other flowers are mentioned? Does the poet give simply a catalogue of them, or does he designate each by some significant touch of beauty? (9) Explain lines 29–32. (10) Lowell emphasized June as the month of spring in New England. Is Timrod right in presenting May here? Why? (11) What caused the outburst of feeling in the last five stanzas? (12) Draw the contrast of spring in war time and in peace as suggested by the poem.

Ode (Timrod)

INTRODUCTORY:

This Ode was sung in Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston, in 1867, on the occasion of the memorial service held on the day set apart for decorating the graves of the Confederate dead. It is one of the last productions of Timrod and may, in a sense, be called his swan song. In its classic restraint and finished beauty it may well be considered his finest poem. It is called, simply, "Ode" because of its elevated quality and its seriousness of tone. The English poet William Collins wrote a poem very similar in form and theme, which he called "Ode Written in the Beginning of the Year 1746," commemorating the British soldiers who fell in the War of the Austrian Succession. Timrod has often been compared with Collins in his life and poetic temperament as well as in individual poems, so it seems desirable to reproduce here Collins' "Ode" that the two poems may be more closely compared.

ODE

Written in the Beginning of the Year 1746

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

EXPLANATORY:

416 : 2. *fallen cause.* The cause of State Sovereignty or the right of the Southern States to secede and form a Confederacy.

416 : 3. *marble column.* A commemorative bronze figure of a color-bearer upon a granite base has since been erected in Magnolia Cemetery.

416 : 5. *In seeds of laurel.* The laurel or bay has been from ancient times a symbol of honor. The poet here conceives that the honor due to the southern soldiers is yet only in the seed, but in imagination he sees the full-blown blossoms even while the seeds are still in the earth.

416 : 9. *behalf.* A poetical condensation for "in behalf of."

416 : 10. *storied.* Containing or suggestive of the stories of valor. Compare Gray's use of the word in his famous *Elegy* where *storied* means pictured images or inscriptions:

> Can storied urn or animated bust
> Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?

417 : 13. *shades.* Spirits.

417 : 15. *cannon-moulded pile.* A lofty commemorative monument made or molded from the brass cannon used in the war.

417 : 16. *bay.* Charleston Bay. Locate it on your map.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What concrete object is given strong emphasis in line 1? This may be called the initial impulse or occasion of the emotion of sorrowful reverence for the dead heroes. (2) Give a phrase for the principal thought in each of the five stanzas. Notice that stanzas 1 and 2 belong to the first thought movement, while 3 and 4 are the answering thought, and in stanza 5, the most beautiful of all, the two thought movements are united into a grand climax. (3) What figure is suggested by the word *craves?* (4) Can you think of a full-blown blossom in a seed that is yet in the earth? Can you think of a shaft in the stone "waiting for its birth"? This is an extremely imaginative stanza. (5) What does the poet mean by "blossom of your fame"? (6) Has the prophecy of stanza 2 been realized? (7) Explain "your sisters." (8) Interpret fully the thought in stanza 4. (9) Exactly what do the words *valor* and *beauty* mean? Notice the fine effect of the two adjectives used with these words. (10) Study closely the sad, solemn beauty of the picture in stanza 4. (11) The stanzaic structure is extremely simple and natural, but this quality of simplicity and naturalness adds to the subdued tone and chaste imagery of the whole lyric. Determine the rhythm and the number of stresses in the lines, and read the poem slowly and quietly, to bring out fully its tonal quality. (12) Memorize the last stanza. (13) In a brief composition make a comparison of Collins' "Ode" (see the introductory note above) with Timrod's.

Lyric of Action (Hayne)

INTRODUCTORY:

In his *History of Southern Literature* Professor Carl Holliday says of this poem: "His *Lyric of Action* should delight every admirer of sturdy manhood. Persevering vigor sounds through every line of it, and coming as it does from a man reduced from great wealth to great poverty and exiled from refined, congenial society to a silent wilderness, the poem should stand as one of the most remarkable exhortations in American literature."

EXPLANATORY:

418 : 27. *the seraph,* etc. Uriel (pronounced ū′rĭ-ĕl), signifying in Hebrew "the light of God." This angel was represented by Milton in *Paradise Lost* (Book III, lines 648 ff.) as the regent of the sun.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What kind of poem is this? (2) Is the hortative style characteristic of any other selections from Hayne here given? (3) Is exhortation or preaching good subject-matter for poetry? (4) How does the poet express the hopes and aspirations of youth? (5) What influence does he appeal to as still potent to give one renewed courage? (6) Interpret lines 8–11. (7) Point out a poetic word form in the second stanza. (8) What state of mind is represented in the exclamation "Too late"? (9) How does the last stanza unify and apply the theme of the whole poem? Do you feel that the repetition of lines from stanza 1 gives a tone of finality to the conclusion of the poem? (10) Make a close comparison of this "Lyric of Action" with Longfellow's "A Psalm of Life," and note the similarity of the two poems in thought and tone.

Composed in Autumn (Hayne)

INTRODUCTORY:

This sonnet and the following one were included in the 1857 volume called *Sonnets and Other Poems*.

EXPLANATORY:

419 : 4. *augury.* Omen of the future, forecast.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the initial impulse of this lyric? (2) Analyze the thought movement by quatrains. (Suggestion: The first quatrain suggests the scene or setting and states the adverse analogies suggested to different minds; the second and third quatrains describe in full the optimistic interpretation of life; the final couplet clinches the analogy by making the comparison suggested in the opening quatrain.) (3) What single figurative idea or analogy runs through the entire poem? Does this help to unify the impression? (4) Work out the rime scheme and determine whether it is the regular (Italian) model or the irregular (English) model. (See the paragraph on the sonnet, in the section on English metrics.)

Great Poets and Small (Hayne)

EXPLANATORY:

419 : 6. *empyreal.* Pertaining to the empyrean. In the ancient conception of the universe the empyrean was the highest heaven, or region of pure fire.

419 : 11. *russet linnet.* A small European song bird of reddish or yellowish brown coloration.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What question is asked in the first quatrain? (2) How is it echoed in the second quatrain? (3) Explain exactly what is meant by "anointed pinion of song's radiant king." (4) How is the thought of the octave applied in the sestet? (5) What conclusion, then, does

the poet reach? (6) What two birds does he select to typify poets of moderate ability? (7) What two does he select to denote poets of supreme gifts? (8) Does the skylark suggest any particular poet to you? Hayne was a great admirer of Percy Bysshe Shelley and addressed one of his best sonnets to that poet. Read Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark." (9) What rime in the octave is carried over to the sestet? This carrying over of a rime from the octave to the sestet is not allowable in the strictest Italian models.

Aspects of the Pines (Hayne)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is a good sample of Hayne's nature lyrics, of which he wrote a great number.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the plan of this poem? Do you think it is a good one? Why? (2) Give a title for each of the three distinct pictures and thus make an outline of the lyric movement. (3) Are the adjectives in the first line well chosen? Why are these adjectives repeated in line 5? (4) Why is the foliage called fadeless, line 3? (5) Trace the effect of the presence or absence of the breezes throughout the stanzas. (6) Do you admire the picture of twilight in the last two lines? Why is the star called tremulous?

Song of the Chattahoochee (Lanier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem first appeared in *Scott's Magazine*, Atlanta, Georgia, in 1877. It is perhaps the most widely known of all Lanier's works; and naturally, for it is so simple and beautiful in its conception and so musical and artistic in its execution that even the youngest readers find pleasure in it. Professor Callaway speaks of this as "Lanier's most finished nature poem . . . the most musical of his productions." It is more than a nature poem, being in reality an artistic expression of the ideal of service.

EXPLANATORY:

421 : 1, 2. *Habersham . . . Hall.* Locate these counties in Georgia, and trace the entire course of the Chattahoochee.

421 : 6. *or . . . or.* Used for *either . . . or*, as often in poetry. See if you can find in your reading a similar use of *nor . . . nor* for *neither . . . nor.*

421 : 17. *for to.* An archaic form, used also in line 43. Can you point out instances of the use of this idiom in the King James version of the Bible?

422 : 38. *Made lures.* Offered allurements for the water to stop. The idea seems to be that the water pouring over the stones makes them more dazzling and attractive.

422 : 43. *fain.* Willing, yearning.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Make an outline of the poem by stanzas, using the five questions following this one for suggestions. (2) How much of the river's course is summarized in stanza 1? (3) What objects are described in stanza 2 as delaying the water? (4) What objects attract the river in stanza 3? (5) What objects offer allurements in stanza 4? (6) What moral is drawn in stanza 5? (7) Apply the progress of thought in the poem to human life, stating just what allurements at the various periods of life tempt one from the course of service. (8) Who speaks throughout the poem? Does this give the poet the opportunity to imitate the sound of the water in his verse? Why is the name of the river not given in the poem? (9) Is there a similarity of tone in the first and last stanzas? How does this help to unify the whole? (10) The meter is typically four-stress iambic, but there are many variations and irregularities for artistic effect. Scan the poem. (11) Professor Kent in his analysis of this poem says: "In five stanzas, of ten lines each, alliteration occurs in all save twelve lines." Prove this statement by actual count, marking the non-alliterative lines. (The lines in which *Hall* occurs alliterate with the preceding lines containing *Habersham.*) (12) He also says: "In eleven of these twelve lines internal rhyme occurs, sometimes joining the parts of a line, sometimes uniting successive lines." Point out the single line which has no internal rime. (13) Memorize the poem. (14) Compare it with Poe's "Eldorado" and Longfellow's "Excelsior."

The Marshes of Glynn (Lanier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This wonderfully musical ode was written in 1878 and published in *The Masque of Poets*, 1879. It is now included as the fourth and last of the incompleted series of marsh hymns placed by Mrs. Lanier as the opening group in Lanier's complete *Poems* (1882 and 1916). "Sunrise," Lanier's last great production, is placed first, and "Individuality" and the briefer "Marsh Song—At Sunset" are placed between "Sunrise" and "The Marshes of Glynn." Critics are about evenly divided as to which of these two last-named is the greater poem, but all are agreed that Lanier's highest power as a musical artist in verse is certainly displayed in these symphonic odes. The first sixty lines of "The Marshes of Glynn" present in long, elaborate, melodiously polyphonic sentences the live-oak forest bordering the marsh, together with the poet's experiences of the long, hot day spent in its shades. Then, as the sun approaches "the ponderous gate of the west," having attained to a mood of peace and courage through his all-day association with nature, the poet steps out on the "firm-packed sand" of the beach just at twilight and views the wonderful salt-water marshes stretching out in never-ending, gracefully sinuous lines northward and southward, bordered by the live-oak forest on the west and the terminal sea on the east. Here begins the thoughtful interpretation of the introspective and profoundly solemn and religious mood induced by the view of the marshes at sunset. The poet's soul is exalted into an almost prophetic state, and he begins to "see into the life of things" as he exclaims,

> Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?

The whole poem, then, may be said to consist of (1) a poetic symphony presenting to eye and ear, mind and heart, the live-oak forest bordering the marsh lands, together with the influences of this natural setting on the poet's soul as he spends the heated hours of the day in the cool shade of the trees (lines 1 to 48); (2) a picture of the wonderful sea marshes at sunset (lines 49 to 60) as they

> Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
> To the terminal blue of the main;

and (3) the interpretation of the mood (lines 61 to 105) induced by the marsh at twilight, together with the statement of the poet's own moral instincts, faith in God, and deeper insight into human life, brought on by the informing influences of the spirit of nature as it is expressed in "the marvellous marshes of Glynn."

EXPLANATORY:

422. *Marshes of Glynn.* The beautiful sea marshes of Glynn County, Georgia, on the Atlantic coast near the city of Brunswick. Ordinarily one cannot think of a marsh as offering inspiration for a great poem; but Lanier, with the true poet's insight, perceived and appreciated the beauty of the salt-water marshes as he knew them along the Georgia coast, and by his wonderful marsh hymns he may be said to have added a distinctly new realm to our poetry of nature.

425 : 61. *terminal sea.* That is, the bordering sea, setting the boundaries of the marshes on the east.

425 : 62, 63. *Somehow my soul,* etc. The poet has been spending the day in the forest trying to understand the mystery of human life with all its stir and struggle—competition for material gain, ambitious strivings, sin, suffering, sorrow, and the like—and now in the presence of the marsh he feels free from all this "fever and fretful stir unprofitable."

425 : 68. *the catholic man.* The broad-minded, all-embracing, liberal man. Etymologically *catholic* means whole, entire, universal.

425 : 78. *liberal marshes.* That is, the broad, free, expansive marshes.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) With what elaborately musical description does the poem open? Why does the poet speak of the "glooms" of the live-oaks at mid-day? (2) What was the effect of the cool shades of the forest upon the poet's soul? Was he thus better prepared to respond to the peculiar beauty of the marsh? (3) Have you ever seen a salt-water marsh? Create as clear a picture as you can of a live-oak forest bordering an ocean beach, and near it an immense stretch of beautiful marsh land covered with graceful, waving, bright green sea-grass "waist-high in the blade." Imagine yourself the poet who has spent the heated hours of the day in the shade of the live-oaks, and is now coming out at twilight upon "the firm-packed sand" of the beach to take in the beautiful view of the marsh as the tide gradually rises to cover it. (4) What is it, do you think, which the poet implies is "abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea," line 61? Do you think that the poet's soul is now in perfect accord with this spirit which expresses itself in the marsh? (5) What

is the key to the interpretation of the marsh, lines 65 to 70? Lanier has himself been described as

> the catholic man who hath mightily won
> God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
> And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

(6) What inspiration does the poet gain from the nest of the marsh-hen upon the tuft of marsh-grass? Memorize lines 71 to 78. (7) Describe the gradual in-flowing of the tide as presented in lines 79 to 94. Do the short lines interspersed at intervals suggest anything of the movement of the water? (8) What sense is appealed to in the image presented in the line "Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr"? What kinds of birds do you think are seeking their roosting places in the forest? (9) How is the passage of time indicated in this whole section? (10) What is indicated in line 94, "And the sea and the marsh are one"? (11) What imaginative suggestion is contained in "The tide is in his ecstasy"? (12) What peculiar comparison is developed in the concluding section? Explain, if you can, just why the note of ignorance or wonder and mystery is added here at the conclusion. (13) Some critics have contended that the poet would have done better to stop with the coming on of night, line 98, where his own faith and spiritual insight and moral calm and peace seem to be almost perfect, like that of the marsh at full tide. Do you agree that it is somewhat inartistic to add a note of ignorance or wonder in the concluding lines? Can man, after all, fully understand all the mysteries of God, nature, and human life? Is it not better to end the poem with a note of inquiry and wonder than to stop with the abrupt statement "And it is night"? Be perfectly frank in expressing your decision on this point. (14) Now study the technical excellences of the poem. Point out a number of good examples of alliteration, repetition, assonance, onomatopeia, internal rime, and similar musical devices. (15) The rhythm is largely anapestic, as in line 64:

˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ /
By the length | and the breadth | and the sweep | of the mar | shes of Glynn.

but there is a good deal of variety of rhythm, substitution, omission of unaccented syllables, and the like. The length of the lines varies from a single stressed syllable to six full anapestic feet. In some lines the rhythm is entirely reversed, as in 49, which becomes dactylic:

/ ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ /
Sinuous | southward and | sinuous | northward the | shimmering | band

The rich and varied rhythm of the poem gives the finest possible medium for the swish and flow of the marsh-grass as the tide comes in; and the variety in line lengths is made to fit admirably into the thought and description as the poet proceeds from image to image. Too much cannot be said of the technical excellences of Lanier's verse. (16) Suggested subjects for compositions: Musical Effects in Lanier's Poetry; Lanier's Life as Revealed in his Poems; Lanier's Nature Poetry; A Comparison of Lanier's and Bryant's Treatment of Nature.

Tampa Robins (Lanier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This lyric was written in 1877 while Lanier was spending the winter months in Tampa, Florida, to try to build up his failing health. It was first published in *Lippincott's Magazine* for March, 1877. Since the original form is somewhat different from the finished poem, it is here reprinted for purposes of comparative study.

REDBREAST IN TAMPA

The robin laughed in the orange tree:
"Ho, windy North, a fig for thee!
While breasts are red and wings are bold,
And green trees wave me globes of gold,
Old Time! thy scythe reaps bliss for me,
So blithe, so blithe, a bird can be.

"If that I hate wild winter's spite—
The gibbet trees, the world in white,
The gray sky bending over a grave —
Why should I ache, the season's slave?
No, no: I sing; and singers be
Too hot for Time's cold tyranny.

"Nay, windy North, I catch my clime:
My wing is king of the summer-time,
Whose constant torch my breast doth hold;
So laugh I through the green and gold,
With: *Time, thy scythe reaps bliss for me,*
So passing blithe we robins be."

EXPLANATORY:

427 : 11. *thrid.* A variant of *thread,* to pass or shoot through like a thread.

427 : 13. *If that.* An archaic idiom meaning simply *if.*

427 : 14. *gibbet trees.* Gallows-like trees. Why are the trees of the northern winter called "gibbet trees"?

427 : 18. *Gramercy.* Many thanks; an archaic word from the French *grand merci,* great thanks, now used in English with a slightly ironical connotation.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Upon what general plan is the whole poem constructed? (2) What is the robin's attitude toward winter, and what is the reason for this attitude? (3) How is the dominant tone of joyous or saucy defiance brought out? Make a list of specific words and phrases that bring out the dominant tone, such as *laughed, a fig for thee,* etc. (4) What are the "globes of gold"? (5) What metaphor does the poet consistently elaborate in the second stanza? Study in particular *burn, globe, leafy sky, shine, shoot, spheres, meteor, orbits,* as suggestive diction in the development of this figure. (6) Why is the robin called a "blithe meteor"? Has his color and swiftness of movement anything to do with the image, or is the poet merely consistently elaborating his more or less fanciful figure? (7) What contrast is developed in the third stanza? Study particularly the tone of this stanza as indicated in such words as *hate, spite, gibbet, white* (snow), *gray wind, grave, ache, slave, tyranny.* (8) How does this third stanza intensify the dominant tone of the poem as a whole? (9) Why should the robin ironically express his thanks (*gramercy*) to the tyranny of the northern

winter? (10) In the fourth stanza what does the robin mean by the lines "My wing is king of the summer-time" and "My breast to the sun his torch shall hold"? (11) What images and words of the first stanza are repeated in the fourth? Does this repetition give a kind of definitive unity and a satisfying close to the poem? (12) Can you point out some good examples of alliteration, internal rime, and assonance for musical effects? Do you think the musical quality of this poem is equal to that of "The Song of the Chattahoochee"? (13) Work out the rime scheme of the simple six-line stanza, determine the meter and rhythm, and note several spondaic substitutions for the regular iambic rhythm. (14) Make a comparative study of the later form of this poem with the original three stanzas as first published in *Lippincott's Magazine* (see introductory note). Do you think the changes are improvements in all cases?

The Stirrup-Cup (Lanier)

INTRODUCTORY:

This beautiful and gloriously courageous little song was made by Lanier in the winter of 1877 when he was in Florida fighting for his life against the terrible disease of consumption. In this song we find just such calmness and firmness and steadfast hope and devotion to high ideals as we might expect from a noble and stainless soul like Lanier's. The courage and optimism of the lyric are contagious, especially when we recall the circumstances of Lanier's life and realize the desperate yet brave struggle that he was making to express himself in the art of poetry before death should overtake him. He once said he had a thousand songs singing in his heart if he only had the time and strength necessary to put them into words.

EXPLANATORY:

427. *Stirrup-cup.* In the olden times whenever a knight or traveler was about to set out on a journey, some one handed him a parting cup of wine or other rich beverage. Hence the farewell or last cup which one must take when he departs from this life may be called the strirup-cup of death. The poet imagines that Time is offering him the stirrup-cup filled with a rich and rare old cordial — namely, Death — which has been compounded from the souls of the choicest of earth's spirits as they have been gathered by Time.

427 : 3. *reaping thee.* That is, reaping sweet herbs for thee.

427 : 6. *Gotama.* This is the generic or family name of the last historic Buddha, a religious teacher of the fifth century B.C., founder of Buddhism, one of the great Eastern religions. Gotama is ordinarily accented on the first syllable, but the rhythm here seems to demand the accent on the second syllable.

427 : 7. *Omar Khayyam.* A Persian poet who died about 1123. His greatest work is the *Rubaiyat*, or quatrains, translated into English by Edward FitzGerald and by many other poets.

427 : 8. *for a king-delight.* The hyphen is used here to save the meaning. The poet does not mean that Shakespeare is a delight for a king, but that he is the chief, the greatest, delight of all.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Under what figure does the poet conceive Death? (2) Who is the chemist who compounds this rare old cordial? (3) Visualize the image of the wrinkled figure of Time with his scythe, reaping down earth's choicest spirits as if they were sweet herbs to be used in making the cordial. What do you think of the image in this connection? (4) Name over the six choice spirits mentioned in the second stanza, and determine just why each one is chosen. Do you think there is a definite plan for illustrating various races and ages in the choice of these names? (5) How does the poet express his own courage and hopefulness in the last stanza? Compare Lanier's attitude with Browning's in his poem "Prospice," or with Tennyson's in his song "Crossing the Bar." (6) What is the metrical plan of the stanza? Do you think a more elaborate stanza would have been in good taste for a thought like that expressed in this poem? (7) Note the inversion of the normal iambic to trochaic rhythm in the first foot of the first, second, third, fifth, sixth, seventh, and tenth lines. This inversion affords the poet opportunity to throw strong emphasis on the initial words of these lines and at the same time to give a pleasing variety to his rhythm. (8) Read the poem over aloud and listen carefully for subtle musical effects brought about by alliteration, as chance, suggestive vowel and consonant sequences, and the like. Do you like this little poem? If so, memorize it as a sort of memento of Lanier's brave, hopeful, noble resolution in the face of inevitable death.

The Ransom of Red Chief (O. Henry)

INTRODUCTORY:

This story appeared first in the *New York World*, and is now included in the volume called *Whirligigs*. It is a fine example of O. Henry's extravagantly humorous productions.

EXPLANATORY:

428 : 5. *apparition.* A malapropism. What is the word intended?

428 : 8. *undeleterious.* What is the more ordinary synonym?

428 : 10. *Bill and me.* Point out other examples of bad grammar and determine the effect of these.

428 : 13. *Philoprogenitiveness.* Love of offspring. Give the etymology of the word. What is the effect of putting such large words in the mouths of the two desperadoes? Point out other examples.

429 : 61. *Geronimo.* A celebrated Apache chieftain.

437 : 356. *the Russian in a Japanese war.* In the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905, the Russians got the worst of it.

438 : 390. *"Great pirates of Penzance!"* An exclamation which owes its origin to the comic opera of similar title, by Gilbert and Sullivan.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Summarize the plot of this story in a single sentence. (2) Is it based on probability? What kind of story is this, then? Does the subversion of actuality add to the humor? (3) Point out examples of comic exaggeration and extravaganza. (4) Point out other humorous effects, such as malapropisms, incongruities, slangy words and

expressions, comic situations, burlesque effects. (5) What sort of language do the two desperadoes simulate? Where does Red Chief get his romantic expressions? Is there any satiric irony in these imitations? (6) How is the opening sentence echoed in the third and fourth paragraphs? (7) What is the appropriateness of the allusion to David and Goliath in lines 182–184? (8) Why did Sam ask Bill if there was any heart disease in his family (line 342)? (9) At what point is the climax of the story reached? Could there be any more surprising outcome than Ebenezer Dorset's counter-proposition? (10) What is the final comic exaggeration? Could anything be more ridiculous than the flight of the two desperadoes? (11) Test this story by Poe's requirements as set forth on p. 348.

The Last Leaf (O. Henry)

INTRODUCTORY:

"The Last Leaf," now included in the volume called *The Trimmed Lamp*, is a typical example of the O. Henry surprise-ending story. The blending of humor and pathos gives a distinct significance to the title of the story, as may be readily suggested by a reference to the quality of Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem with the same title. See note on p. 564–565.

EXPLANATORY:

440 : 1. *Washington Square.* A section in New York City.

440 : 10. *north windows.* Why do artists always want north windows?

440 : 17. *table d'hote . . . "Delmonico's."* A public or common table; a meal as served in a hotel or restaurant. Delmonico's was a famous and expensive restaurant in New York; hence a cheap Eighth Street restaurant may be facetiously called a "Delmonico's."

441 : 39. *pharmacopeia.* The large, authoritative reference book containing the formulae, qualities, doses, etc., of drugs. O. Henry was himself a drug clerk in his youth, and hence he was perfectly familiar with the *United States Pharmacopeia.*

442 : 80. *ivy vine.* This is the American ivy or Virginia creeper rather than the English ivy, since the leaves of the latter do not fall off in the winter. See also the reference to "serrated edges" in line 185.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Show how rapidly and yet vividly the setting is sketched in and how deftly the characters are introduced. (2) In what paragraph does the action of the story begin? (3) What is the opposing force as introduced in this paragraph? What advantage is gained by personifying the disease? (4) Why is the doctor so insistent that Johnsy's recovery depends largely upon her wanting some particular thing? (5) Sue mentions the painting of the Bay of Naples (line 42), and the doctor suggests that he would like Johnsy to ask a question about styles (line 54). Are these points alluded to again? (See lines 215, 218, and 232.) (6) What humorous effect is intended in the passage describing Sue's sketch of the cowboy for the magazine story? Do you think that in the circumstances under which she was drawing she might be pardoned for making such a mistake? (7)

How is Johnsy's counting managed so as to arouse the reader's interest? Do you understand at first the significance of her counting? (8) Do you think Sue's fib about ten to one was justifiable? (9) Why does Sue make the joke about "selling the editor"? (10) Johnsy speaks of her dying as a turning loose and floating down like one of the ivy leaves. Is this fancy well expressed in the text? At what point is the fancy referred to again? (11) Why is it necessary in the progress of the plot that Sue should go down just before dark to seek Behrman? (12) Give a brief sketch of Behrman's appearance and character as you conceive them from the author's portrayal. (13) Is there any humor intended in Behrman's dialect? Why are his speeches more pathetic than humorous? (14) At what points in the story is Behrman's masterpiece referred to? Is this significant in the catastrophe and dénouement of the story? (15) Why did Sue pull down the shade when she entered her room and found Johnsy asleep? Do you think she knew what Behrman was going to do? Give passages to prove your answer. (16) Why is it necessary to describe the last leaf in full on p. 445? Is there a later reference to the colors mentioned here? (17) Do you suspect the truth in regard to the last ivy leaf when you first read of Behrman's case of pneumonia, or are you thoroughly surprised when you read the last paragraph? (18) Why is Behrman's case of illness related in so rapid and sketchy a manner? Is the author probably hurrying to a conclusion before you can guess the outcome? (19) How do you like this type of story? Is there a deeper note underlying the light and half-humorous style of the narrative? (20) Point out five humorous touches, such as the reference to the collector "meeting himself coming back"; and five striking descriptive phrases, such as "the red-fisted, short-breathed old duffer."

Gettysburg Address (Lincoln)

INTRODUCTORY:

After the battle fought at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on July 1–2, 1863, thousands of soldiers, northern and southern, were buried on the battlefield. It was decided to make a national cemetery here, and on November 19, 1863, a vast concourse of people met to dedicate the ground. Edward Everett, the distinguished orator from Massachusetts, made the principal address on this occasion, speaking for about two hours. Then Lincoln rose and spoke briefly, summing up in a few words the whole thought and pent-up emotion of the audience and the nation. Everett's address is described as a finished and scholarly production with all the graces of literary culture; but Lincoln's speech, voicing as it did the real sentiment of the people, in its simple words, direct and straightforward utterance, and profound moral earnestness and sincerity, has become one of the priceless literary heritages of our nation. Perhaps there cannot be found a more striking example of the difference between a faultless literary form without the real breath of life in it and a simple, heart-felt expression of true, throbbing literature. Everett himself in a note to Lincoln the day after the dedicatory exercises remarked on this fact, practically admitting that he had not been able in two hours to touch as Lincoln had done in two minutes the central idea of the occasion.

EXPLANATORY:

447 : 1. *Fourscore and seven years.* To just what date and event does Lincoln here refer?

447 : 6. *a great battle-field.* Look up in your United States history the description of this battle, and if possible consult a map of the whole region around Gettysburg, a section of which has now become a great national park.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In what terse way is the whole of our history as a nation brought vividly before the minds of the audience? (2) Why would it have been inappropriate to dwell on the details of our past history? (3) By what rhetorical means is the present crisis vitally connected with our first great national crisis? Repeat the two phrases which mark this connection. (4) What central word is carried over into the third paragraph as a connecting link, and what three strong clauses in parallel construction are placed side by side to emphasize the central thought? (5) In what words does the speaker show his utter unconsciousness of any effort to produce a literary masterpiece? Is the previous oratorical effort of Edward Everett inadvertently judged in this utterance? (6) Do you think that the prophecy that the world will "little note nor long remember" the words uttered on this occasion has been fulfilled? Of course it is, as Lincoln said, the deeds of the brave soldiers that really consecrated the field—the deeds of southerners as well as northerners, for each side was fighting bravely for right as each conceived it—but these brave deeds are more effectively enshrined in the consummate art of this short address than they can ever be in marble or bronze or national park. (7) What is the most frequently quoted phrase in the speech? (8) This speech has been called "the greatest oration in American history." Do you agree with this judgment? Give some reasons for your decision. (9) Compare the speech with other notable utterances, such as Patrick Henry's "Speech on Liberty," Washington's "Farewell Address," Webster's "First Bunker Hill Oration," etc.

Young America (Lincoln)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is the opening passage of a lecture on "Discoveries, Inventions, and Improvements" delivered by Lincoln at his home, Springfield, Illinois, under the auspices of the Springfield Library Association on February 22, 1859. It is a good example of Lincoln's keen sense of humor, sound common sense, and remarkable poise and complacency even in the midst of the political turmoil of the times. He had just come out of the notable race for the United States Senate, in which he met Stephen A. Douglas in joint debate and laid the basis of his future political fame. It is rather remarkable that Lincoln could turn aside from the discussion of the seething political issues of the day to write this quiet and amusing account of "Young America" as an introduction to his lecture. The present text is taken from the original autograph manuscript in the Lincoln Collection of Mr. Charles F. Gunther, of Chicago, by whose permission it is reproduced here.

EXPLANATORY:

448 : 2. *Current.* That is, talked of, passing from mouth to mouth.

448 : 7. *Manchester and Lowell.* Cotton-manufacturing cities in England. We now have the important cotton-manufacturing town of Lowell in Massachusetts, and also several American manufacturing towns called Manchester.

448 : 13. *Turk's Island(s).* Salt-producing islands south of the Bahamas.

448 : 25. *As Plato had, etc.* The allusion is to Plato's famous argument in favor of the immortality of the soul.

448 : 29. *the new earth mentioned in the Revelations.* Rev. 21:1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

449 : 42. "*Manifest Destiny.*" That is, the inevitable future greatness and influence of the United States. The phrase was widely popular among political and other public orators about the middle of the nineteenth century, and Lincoln is here alluding to it in a semi-humorous or satiric sense.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What characteristics are ascribed to Young America in the opening sentences? (2) The progressiveness of Young America is indicated in the number of supplies the world furnishes for his daily life. Summarize these. (3) How is the American habit of acquisitiveness presented? What humorous touches do you note in the last half of the first paragraph? What is the general tone of the whole passage as indicated by this first paragraph? (4) In the second paragraph, in which the Old Fogy Adam is contrasted with Young America, what humorous touches do you note? (5) In the third paragraph the real subject of the lecture is introduced. Show how the speaker has skillfully led up to the main topic of his discourse. (6) In this paragraph the author goes back to trace the process of the growth of inventions, with characteristic humor beginning with Adam's supposed invention of the fig-leaf apron.

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County (Mark Twain)

INTRODUCTORY:

Early in 1865 Mark Twain was in Calaveras County, California, trying his luck at pocket mining with his friend Jim Gillis. The weather was cold, rainy, and disagreeable, and the two friends worked intermittently on their claim. They spent a good deal of time loafing in the tavern at Angel's Camp. A retired Illinois River pilot by the name of Ben Coon, "a solemn, fat-witted person," used to tell stories whenever he could find willing listeners, and Clemens and Gillis were his most frequent victims. On one dreary, rainy day, he told them in his slow, monotonous fashion the story of the jumping frog owned by a man named Coleman. Clemens was particularly struck with the serious style of the narrator and the humor of the story, and so he made the following note for future reference: "Coleman with his jumping frog—bet stranger $50—stranger had no frog, and C. got him one:—in the meantime stranger filled C's frog full of shot and he could n't jump. The stranger's frog won." Gillis and Clemens used to try to keep up their courage in working their claim by repeating over and over parts of this story just as they had heard it, preserving the serious and solemn manner of the narrator, with never a smile or suggestion of humor. The two men finally abandoned their claim just as they were on the verge of uncovering a rich pocket of gold. Other miners found the treasure, but as Mark Twain's biographer asserts, "The Jumping Frog" nugget was worth more than all the gold in that rich pocket.

Charles F. Browne, better known under his *nom de plume* of Artemus Ward, was publishing a book in New York, and when he heard Mark Twain's "Jumping Frog" story, he asked permission to use it. Twain sent it on to New York; but it arrived too late for the book and was handed over to the *Saturday Press*, where it appeared November 19, 1865, under the title of "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog." Its success was immediate and astonishing. It was copied, quoted, and retold all over the country. Mark Twain literally jumped into fame on the back of this celebrated frog. The story was published with other sketches in the spring of 1867, and it has remained one of the prime favorites in the public regard. So widely known did the story become that a professor of Greek decided to condense it, put the scene back two thousand years in ancient Boeotia with an Athenian and a Boeotian as the two principal characters, and thus make a good exercise for his book in Greek prose composition. He did not think it necessary to give credit for the source of so well known a story, and so another professor called Mark Twain's attention to the fact that the germ story was found in the Greek and offered to show him the original. It was many years before Mark Twain came to realize that the Greek professor had borrowed his story, and in the meantime he published in the *North American Review* a sketch called "Private History of the 'Jumping Frog' Story," in which he declared his ignorance of the existence of the Greek story and explained the wonderful similarity between the two versions as a plain case of history repeating itself. Thus the joker was for once made the victim of a double-barreled joke.

EXPLANATORY:

451. *Calaveras.* A county in east-central California.

451 : 3. *Simon Wheeler.* Ben Coon, otherwise called Ros Coon, Coon Drayton, etc. See introductory note.

452 : 46. *flume.* A trough used to convey water in mining industries.

453 : 97. *ornery.* Ordinary, mean, low-down.

456 : 207. *hysted.* Hoisted; the old pronunciation of *oi* is still preserved in dialectal usage, as in *ile*, *bile*, for *oil*, *boil*, etc.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the main value of the introduction? (The point of the story is as largely centered in the character who tells it and in the manner in which it is told as in the humor of the story itself.) (2) Do you see any irony in the name of the camp and in the identification of *Rev. Leonidas W.* Smiley with *Jim* Smiley? (3) Describe how Simon

Wheeler cornered his victim and told the story (paragraph 3). Why does this add materially to the humor of the story? (4) Discuss the method of development used in bringing out the character of Jim Smiley. (5) Give examples of some of the things that Jim would bet on. Which of these do you think most amusing? (6) What is the appropriateness of naming the bull pup Andrew Jackson? (7) What climactic effect is there in the order and treatment of the different betting episodes? (8) What humorous effects do you note in the description of "Dan'l Webster"? Why is the frog so named? (9) Tell the whole of the frog episode in your own language. Is the story itself very funny? (10) Now read this episode in Simon Wheeler's style, and note how much is added to it by the dialect, quaint expressions, and slow, serious, monotonous drawl in which Simon recited it. (11) Is the conclusion skillfully conceived and executed? How did the visitor finally break away from Simon? (12) Name the four characters in the order of their importance in the story.

Tennessee's Partner (Harte)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Tennessee's Partner" belongs to the early group of California mining stories; by many readers it is ranked as Bret Harte's masterpiece in the short story. Its theme is the unswerving loyalty of one partner to another. Placer miners usually worked in pairs in the early days of western mining, but to be a man's partner meant much more than to enter into a mere business relationship; as Bret Harte himself said, "it was to be his friend through good and ill report, in adversity, or fortune, to cleave to him and no other." "Tennessee's Partner" is built upon a slight basis of fact in the lives of two real partners, but Harte has used the author's privilege of making such changes and additions as are needed to enhance the artistic effects of the story. Two men named Chamberlain and Chaffee were the originals respectively of Tennessee and his partner. They came to California about 1849, the date of the "gold fever" rush to the West. Chamberlain was accused of stealing some miner's gold and was about to be hanged by the vigilance committee of the camp. Chaffee, who believed him guiltless, defended him so vigorously that the committee released the accused miner. The two then became inseparable partners and lived together to a ripe old age, earning their living by continuing their mining operations. Out of this simple incident the author has created a permanent work of art. The story first appeared in the *Overland Monthly*, 1869, from which source it is here reprinted.

EXPLANATORY:

458 : 5. "*Dungaree Jack.*" Dungaree is a coarse cotton cloth used for sailors' working clothes.

458 : 7. "*Saleratus Bill.*" Saleratus is cooking soda.

458 : 11. *iron pyrites.* An iron ore of bright yellow crystals which look like flecks of gold. The humorous effect, of course, is brought out by mispronunciation, as well as by the fact that the mild, inoffensive man is nicknamed "Iron Pirate."

458 : 22. *relative title.* That is, a title showing his relation of partner to Tennessee.

458 : 24. *Poker Flat.* Poker Flat, Sandy Bar, Red Dog, Roaring Camp, were typical names of California mining settlements. For fuller particulars of the camp here referred to, read "The Outcasts of Poker Flat."

460 : 70. *weppings.* Is this intended humorously by Tennessee? Give the correct spelling.

460 : 88. *"I call."* A term in a card game, meaning "I demand the show of your hand." The stranger's reply of "Two bowers and an ace" and Tennessee's answer, "That takes me," continue the humorous allusions to the game of euchre. Why are the two revolvers called "bowers," and the bowie-knife an "ace"? Find other phrases in the story borrowed from card playing (see pp. 461, 463, and 464).

465 : 263. *"diseased."* The pun on *deceased* is evident. Do you think that Tennessee's partner was conscious of any witticism?

466 : 284. *catafalque.* An elaborately decorated scaffold for bearing the dead. Note the pathetic contrast implied in the adjective *homely.*

466 : 288. *Jack Folinsbee.* Harte had a way of repeating his characters from story to story, always preserving their salient characteristics. Jack Folinsbee is a prominent character in the stories "An Heiress of Red Dog" and "The Romance of Madroño Hollow." Similarly the wag "Boston," mentioned in the opening paragraph, p. 458, appears in the same capacity in "The Luck of Roaring Camp."

Look up the following words and add them to your working vocabulary: *constrained, prototype, implacable, preternatural, condoned, amity, site, sanity.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the theme of the story? Has the author made his purpose perfectly clear? (2) Just what has the author added to the original incident, and why? (See introductory note.) (3) Which element is more prominent, plot, setting, or characterization? (4) Divide the story into an introduction, minor incidents, main incident, climax, and conclusion, and thus make a topical outline of the story. (5) Does the author successfully present the atmosphere of a mining camp? Point out several "local color" effects. (6) What humorous touches do you note in the opening paragraph? In Tennessee's Partner's courtship? In Tennessee's arrest and trial? (7) Point out at least four instances of pathos. Does the author elaborate at these points, or does he merely state the situation, leaving the reader to detect for himself the poignant suffering of the hero? (8) Which element is more prominent, humor or pathos? How are the two elements blended throughout the story? (9) With what artistic effects does the writer weave in his descriptive passages? Examine particularly the passages beginning "It was a warm night," p. 460; "For he was not, certainly," p. 461; "But the beauty of that midsummer morning," p. 464; "As the cart drew up," p. 465; "The way led through," p. 466. (10) Study the two characters closely and be prepared to make an oral report on each. Do you think Tennessee was worthy of his partner's devotion? (11) Examine for simplicity, natural eloquence, and poignant pathos the speeches of Tennessee's Partner at the trial and the funeral. What would have been the effect of making these speeches more formal and dignified? (12) Do you think the author has over-elaborated the dream scene of the conclusion, or has he given just enough to make

the desired impression? Why is Tennessee described in this scene as "sober and his face a-shining"? How does the last word uttered by the dying man unify and emphasize the theme of the story?

Grizzly (Harte)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem first appeared in the *Overland Monthly* in 1869. Bret Harte had himself once met with a huge grizzly in a lonely, steep-sided cañon. Knowing that flight or other evidence of fear on his part might excite curiosity and possibly a fight on the bear's part, Harte kept straight on his course, and when he approached within ten yards of the animal, the bear turned, scrambled up the side of the cañon, and disappeared. It is interesting to note that Harte used a grizzly standing astride a railroad track as the emblem for the *Overland Monthly*, of which he was editor from its beginning in 1868 to 1870. He said that his idea was that the bear standing at bay and looking at the (invisible) train approaching represented the beginning of the conflict between savage life and advancing civilization.

EXPLANATORY:

469 : 11. *plantigrade.* Walking on the sole of the foot as a man walks.

469 : 24. *Friar Tuck.* The jovial priest who was associated with Robin Hood in Sherwood forest. For a full portrait of Friar Tuck, the jolly hermit of Copmanhurst, see Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, chapters xvi, xvii, and others.

469 : 25. *tithe and dole.* Tithe is the tenth of one's income, which was the priest's due. *Dole* is a gratuity or extra gift for charity or for the priest's comfort. Note how the poet maintains throughout the stanza the imaginative comparison of the grizzly with the priest.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How are both the character and the appearance of the bear presented in stanza one? (2) Why is the bear's habitat called "Epicurean retreats"? (3) Why is the comparison of the bear with Friar Tuck a happy one? (See the introductory note.) (4) Does the poem as a whole give you a vivid conception of the grizzly? (5) In what rhythm and meter is the poem written? How should *exploits* and *Epicurean* (lines 6 and 20) be pronounced to bring out the proper rhythm? Would you call these blemishes or merely examples of poetic license?

Dickens in Camp (Harte)

INTRODUCTORY:

Dickens died in June, 1870, and this poem was written in July and published immediately in the *Overland Monthly.* H. C. Merwin, in his *Life of Bret Harte*, gives the following footnote: "When news of the death of Dickens reached Bret Harte he was camping in the foothills, far from San Francisco, but he sent a telegram to hold back for a day the printing of the *Overland*, then ready for the press, and his poem was written that night and forwarded the next morning. A week or two later Bret Harte received a cordial letter from Dickens, written just before his death, complimenting the California author, and requesting him to write a story for *All the Year Round*." The influence of Dickens on Harte has been frequently noted, and in this poem the American writer frankly intimates that Dickens was his master. No finer tribute to the art and power of Dickens could have been offered than this incident in a Western mining camp. It is an indirect method of criticism, but it is much more effective than any amount of direct and fulsome praise of the author would have been. The most notable qualities of the poem are its utter simplicity; its tender and sincere emotion; its use of nature as a living, sympathetic background; and its sober and subdued music—all of which represent the poet's sense of loss and sadness at the departure of the great novelist.

EXPLANATORY:

470 : 8. *In the fierce race for wealth.* Just what is referred to here? Give the approximate date of the story.

470 : 16. *Had writ of "Little Nell."* *Writ* is an archaic form of *written*. The title of the novel, of course, is *The Old Curiosity Shop*. If you have not read this novel, by all means do so at once.

470 : 30. *And he who wrought that spell?* That is, Dickens. Just what is the force of the question?

470 : 31. *Kentish spire.* Dickens' home was at Gad's Hill in the shire of Kent in the southeast of England.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Show how the poem may be divided into three parts—setting, main incident, and conclusion—and give an appropriate heading for each division. (2) By what means do you get a fairly vivid picture of the camp and its life? (3) How does the poet manage to pay a high tribute to Dickens without directly praising him? (4) Just what is meant by the last line? (5) Read the poem again now, and note every reference to the pines and related evergreens. Just what is the artistic value of this constant reference to the trees? At what point does nature herself seem to fall under the novelist's spell? Give quotations. (6) Why does the poet select oak, holly, and laurel wreaths for the novelist's grave in Kent? (7) Study the peculiar forcefulness of the following words: *sang* (line 2), *minarets* (line 4), *clustering* (line 19), *listened* (line 22), *gusty* (line 28), *fragrant* (line 33), *pensive* (line 35), *all* (line 39). (8) Notice how the stanza is constructed. How many stresses in the long lines, and how many in the short lines? Where do the feminine rimes occur? The masculine rimes? Is there any variation from this arrangement of rimes? (9) In what tone should the poem be read? Let some good reader give it now in his best style of oral reading. (10) Let the class tell the story of Little Nell, and then turn the discussion to Dickens and his stories.

Kit Carson's Ride (Miller)

INTRODUCTORY:

When Miller published his first volume in London in 1870, it was so well received that the editor of the *Oxford Magazine* asked him to contribute something to that journal. The result was "Kit Carson's

Ride." The poem was later revised, as is indicated in the following note printed in Vol. II of the 1909 edition of his complete works: "This poem, 'Kit Carson,' was not in any of my four first books, and so has not been rightly revised till now. It was too long for the tumultuous and swift action; and then the end was coarse and unworthy the brave spirit of Kit Carson. I have here cut and changed it much; as I cut and changed all the matter of my three preceding books in London when I cut and compressed all I had done worth preserving into the *Songs of the Sierras.*"

EXPLANATORY:

472. *Kit Carson.* Christopher Carson was a famous trapper and scout who spent his life in the Far West and became famous as the typical scout and hunter of that country. His life reads like a romance, and many of his adventures have been incorporated in stories of western life. The incident related here is probably purely imaginary.

472 : 16. *badger blind.* The badger is a burrowing animal, nocturnal in its habits, and hence cannot see well in the daylight. This has given rise to the popular impression that the badger is blind. *Pache,* the name of the horse, is probably a reduced form of *Apache.*

472 : 22. *Brazos.* A long river in Texas.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the main value of the introductory stanza? Do you think it gives an adequate expression of the poet's enthusiasm for the wild, free, generous western life? (2) After this poem, what plan does the author choose for the presentation of the story? Who does the talking? (3) Tell the story of the ride. (4) Point out two of the most vivid descriptive passages. (5) Do you catch the rapid galloping movement of the anapestic rhythm? Scan four lines beginning "Not a word," line 71. (6) Compare the form and spirit of this poem with Browning's "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix." (Miller met Browning at a breakfast at Archbishop Trench's just about the time he got the commission to write this poem, and he asked permission to "borrow the measure and spirit of his 'Good News' for a prairie fire on the plains, driving buffalo and all other life before it into a river." Browning laughingly asked Miller why he did not borrow the rhythm from Vergil as he himself had done.)

Columbus (Miller)

INTRODUCTORY:

In the final edition of his works Miller says this poem was singled out by the London *Athenaeum* as the best American poem. He dissented from this judgment, saying, "It is far from that; even I have done better; too much like a chorus." There are probably more characteristic poems to be found in his work, especially the poems dealing more specifically with western life and scenery, but none of his productions has met a warmer popular response than this stirring presentation of heroic determination.

EXPLANATORY:

475 : 1. *Azores.* A group of islands, the last of which is a little more than a thousand miles west of Portugal.

475 : 2. *Gates of Hercules.* Strait of Gibraltar. Look up the reference to the Pillars of Hercules in a classical mythology.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Visualize the scene and characters and determine just what is the state of affairs on the ships. (2) Why is it a good plan to allow the mate to do the talking for the crew? (3) Why are the words of Columbus, the admiral, always given at the end of the stanzas? (4) The real meaning of the poem is couched in these constantly repeated words. Explain just what the real theme is. (5) How is the emotional tension increased from stanza to stanza? Do you note any climactic effect in the plan? (6) What is the meaning of a "spray of salt wave" in lines 11 and 12? (7) What is the effect of the repetition in line 25? (8) Expound the figure in lines 26–28, and express your opinion of it. (9) What other striking figure do you find in this stanza? (10) Does the poet make you feel that something dreadful would have happened if land had not been sighted just at the right moment? What do you think might have occurred? (11) What imaginative touch do you find regarding our future flag in the last stanza? (12) For the sake of its heroic spirit and inspiring optimism in the face of difficulties, the whole class should memorize this poem.

In the Firelight (Field)

INTRODUCTORY:

Field made no pretense to religious convictions and never allied himself with any denomination, but his poems are so full of the Christ spirit and childlike faith in God that no one can doubt that "he walked in the light of the love of God." This poem clearly indicates his fundamental belief in God and the efficacy of prayer. The poem was written in 1885.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the mood of the poet? Does the setting of the poem harmonize with this mood? (2) What is the effect of the child's prayer on the poet's musing? (3) Are there any unusual words or strained allusions in the poem? What is it, then, that gives the very high poetical quality to the selection? (4) Do you like this kind of poetry? (5) Determine the meter and rime scheme. (6) By what device are the first and last stanzas united and the poem thus satisfactorily rounded out?

Dutch Lullaby (Field)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was first printed in the *Chicago Daily News*, March, 1889. It has been exquisitely set to music by Reginald De Koven, and if possible the class should arrange to hear some good singer interpret the lyric as set to music.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Just what are Wynken, Blynken, Nod, and the wooden shoe intended to symbolize? Where is this revealed? (2) Why are *Wynken* and *Blynken* so spelled (see the title)? (3) What is the effect on your imagination as you read the stanzas? Point out some of the exquisite imaginative touches in the description of the fishing voyage. (4) Would you say that this poem has a strong esthetic appeal? Explain in just what its beauty primarily consists. (5) The rhythm is a combination of iambic and anapestic feet arranged in four-stressed and three-stressed lines alternately rimed. The refrain in each stanza is arranged in monometer, or one-stressed lines, for slow rendition, as if the little one were falling to sleep. Scan the first stanza. (6) Read the poem in the most sympathetic approximation to the poet's own mood that you can command.

Little Boy Blue (Field)

INTRODUCTORY:

Just as "Dutch Lullaby" is the finest example of Field's playful sentiment and childlike fancy or imagination, so "Little Boy Blue" is the finest product of his interpretation of the pathos of child life. Thousands of poems have been written about dead children and sorrowing parents, but not one of them, we venture to assert, can be compared with the simplicity, sincerity, and poignant pathos of Field's lines on "Little Boy Blue."

EXPLANATORY:

479 : 6. *passing.* Surpassingly.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Determine the mood of the poem, the specific emotion embodied in it, and the tone in which this emotion can be best expressed. (2) What objects are used to motivate the poem, that is, what objects suggest the lyric mood and start the poet upon his theme? (3) Reproduce the picture presented in the first four lines and contrast this with the reminiscence contained in the next four lines. (4) What is the peculiar force of line 8? Do you get a definite suggestion as to the child's disposition and age in this line? (5) Just why are the child's two last commands to his toys appropriate to the situation? (6) Is *awakened* a suggestive word in line 14? Just what is meant by this line? (7) Is it perfectly accurate to assume that the toys are consciously waiting for their little friend and wondering why he does not come? Does the idea of this patient waiting of the toys increase the pathos of the poem? Why? (8) What line from the first stanza is repeated in the last, and what is the artistic effect of this repetition? (9) Why is it better to call the child "Little Boy Blue" than to give him some real name? How do you suppose the child got this nickname? Repeat the nursery rime from which it is taken. (10) How many children do you imagine there were in the home of Little Boy Blue? (11) The rhythm is anapestic with a considerable number of iambic substitutions, as is almost always the case in poems made in the longer rhythms, such as anapestic and dactylic. The third line may be scanned as a model:

˘ ˘ / | ˘ ˘ / | ˘ ˘ / | ˘ /
And the lit | tle toy sol | dier is red | with rust.

Scan a stanza of this poem. (12) Now read the lyric again in a slow time, with a sad and subdued tone of voice, and a keen and sympathetic feeling. You must imagine yourself to be in the place of the parents of Little Boy Blue as they are looking at the toys of the child just as he left them many years ago.

Afterwhiles (Riley)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was written as a Proem for the volume called *Afterwhiles* published in 1887. It illustrates the soft, dreamy, appealing, sentimental quality of Riley's more serious verse.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What thought runs through the entire poem? Work out the progress of this thought from the opening query (stanza 1), through the various hopes and intentions that nearly every one has for some "afterwhiles" (stanzas 2, 3, 4), to the concluding stanza which leads out into the afterwhile of eternity. (2) What is the dominant tone and emotional quality of this poem? (3) Does the language harmonize with this tone and quality? Characterize the style. (4) Do you detect any harsh or jarring notes in the diction? Would "'graved with" or "carved with" be better in line 56? (5) Do you think the trochaic rhythm is appropriate for a poem of this kind? Give the formula for the meter and rime scheme.

The Raggedy Man (Riley)

INTRODUCTORY:

This, which is, with "Little Orphant Annie," the most popular of all Riley's child-life poems, was first published in the *Century Magazine*, December, 1890, and in the same year included in the volume called *Rhymes of Childhood*. "The Raggedy Man was not a tramp, nor was he so ragged as people usually seem to think," says Riley. "He was just a farmer boy from some neighboring family." He is elsewhere called "the hired man," "the boy who lives on our farm," etc. In some editions the third, fourth, sixth, and seventh stanzas are omitted.

EXPLANATORY:

483 : 8. "*Lizabuth Ann.*" She reappears in "Our Hired Girl" and also in other poems.

483 : 22. *rambos.* A kind of late autumn apples.

483 : 26. "*The Smoot Farm.*" There was a farm near Riley's boyhood home owned by Warner Smoot.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the effect of the child's talk? Is the simulation of boy language natural? (2) What is the effect of the child's artless revelations about the various actions of the Raggedy Man with respect

to the hired girl? How is this interest emphasized? (Note that wherever the two names are mentioned it is always in conjunction.) (3) In what climactic way is the child's regard for the Raggedy Man finally expressed? (4) Work out the rhythm so as to show how often anapestic feet occur, and try to determine just what gives the lilting effect of the poem.

Gloucester Moors (Moody)

INTRODUCTORY:

This excellent lyric was first published in *Scribner's Magazine* for December, 1900, and in the next year included as the initial poem in Moody's first volume of verse, a position which it retains in the final edition of his complete poems (1912). In its combination of pure lyricism, imaginative power, and genuine sympathy for the toiling masses, it is unsurpassed in recent American poetry.

EXPLANATORY:

486 : 1. *Gloucester town.* A seaport of Essex County, Massachusetts, noted especially for its fishing industries.

486 : 10. *Jill-o'er-the-ground.* Gill-or jill-over-the-ground is another name for the ground-ivy, a creeping herb having bluish-purple flowers and kidney-shaped leaves.

486 : 11. *quaker-maid.* The quaker-ladies or -maids are the tiny blue flowers of the plant *Houstonia caerulea*, commonly called bluets.

487 : 40. *phosphor wake.* That is, the moon floats in the phosphorescent wake of the earth — namely, the Milky Way.

487 : 55. *battened hatch.* A hatch is an opening in the deck of a ship through which passengers or freight may be lowered into the hold. A battened hatch is such an opening covered with coarse canvas held in place by iron or wood strips called battens.

488 : 68. *moiling.* Toiling, defiled.

488 : 91. *slaver's pen.* The hold of a slave ship.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Give the initial impulse of this lyric as expressed in the first stanza. Does the poet seem to be writing with his eye on the objects he describes? (2) Point out some of the most suggestive images in the first stanza. At what time of day and year is the scene drawn? (3) What elements of decoration or beauty are added to the picture in the second stanza? In the third? Can you visualize each of the flowers and the birds from the brief suggestions here given? (4) Note how the poet has built up the beautiful scene which is the inspiration of the imaginative journey through space which is to follow. Into what mood has he exalted himself? (5) Work out in detail the wonderfully imaginative sweep of the figure in the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh stanzas, explaining for example, "With velvet plunge and soft upreel," "pinnace frail," "The star fleets tack and wheel and veer." (6) What criticism is laid upon the captains of the great world ship in stanza six? (7) The seventh stanza contains the real message of the poem. How do you interpret it? What does the "noisome hold" represent? Why did those on the deck refuse to give help? (8) In the

last three stanzas the poet returns to the opening motive, but makes the application to the deeper thought of social sympathy for earth's unhappy masses, thus uniting the two parts of the poem in a vital way. Note particularly how the last two stanzas are balanced against each other so as to bring out the connection between the two parts, the fishing fleet coming into harbor suggesting the final harbor of the world ship. What two ideals are contrasted in the last stanza? (9) Read the poem over as many times as may be necessary to make you begin to comprehend its wonderful melody and beauty, its imaginative power, and its deeper message of love and brotherhood. (10) Study the plan of the nine-line stanza, and give the formula for the rime scheme and meter.

A PRONOUNCING LIST OF PROPER NAMES FOUND IN THE TEXT

Diacritically Marked According to Webster's International Dictionary, 1916; and Other Standard Authorities

Abernethy (ăb′ẽr nė thĭ)
Acadian (ȧ kā′dĭ ăn)
Acadie (ȧ′kā′dē′)
Achilles (ȧ kĭl′ēz)
Adayes (ä dā′yĕs)
Adirondac (ăd′ĭ rŏn′dăk)
Ægipans (ē′jĭ pănz)
Aeneas Sylvius (ė nē′ăs sĭl′vĭ ŭs)
Agassiz (ăg′ȧ sė)
Aladdin (ȧ lăd′ĭn)
Al-Borak (ăl′bȯ răk′)
Alcott (ôl′kŭt)
Alligewi (ăl ĭ jē′wĭ)
Alpine (ăl′pĭn)
Amonoosuck (ăm ȯ no͞o′sŭk)
Amontillado (ä mōn′tėl yä′thō)
Amun (ä′mo͞on)
Angelus Domini (ăn′jė lŭs
dŏm′ĭ nī)
Apollonius (ăp′ŏ lō′nĭ ŭs)
Appalachian (ăp′ȧ lăch′ĭ ăn)
Apuleius (ăp′ū̇ lē′yŭs)
Araxes (ȧ răk′sēz)
Argonauta (är′gȯ nô′tȧ)
Ariadne (ăr′ĭ ăd′nē)
Aristophanes (ăr′ĭs tŏf′ȧ nēz)
Atchafalaya (ăch′ȧ fȧ lĭ′ ȧ)
Athenian (ȧ thē′nĭ ăn)
Atrée (ä trā′)
Auber (ō′bẽr)
Austerlitz (ôs′tẽr lĭts)
Ave Maria (ä′vā mä rē′ ä)
Avolio (ȧ vō′lĭ ō)
Azores (ȧ zōrz′)

Babylonish (băb ĭ lō′nĭsh)
Bacchantes (bă kăn′tēz)
Bacchus (băk′ŭs)
Balfour (băl′fo͝or)
Barca (bär′kä)
Basil (băz′ĭl; bā′zĭl)
Bayard (bā′ȧrd; Fr. bȧ′yȧr′)
Beaumont (bō′mŏnt)
Beau Séjour (bō sā zho͞or′)
Beethoven (bā′tō vĕn)
Belphegor (bĕl′fė gôr)
Benedicite (bĕn′ė dĭs′ĭ tė)
Benedict Bellefontaine
(bĕn′ė dĭkt bĕl′fŏn tān′)
Berkshire (bûrk′shĭr)
Blomidon (blŏm′ĭ dŏn)
Bonduca (bŏn dū′kȧ)
Brasidas (brăs′ĭ dăs)
Brazos (brä′zōs)
Bruges (bro͞o′jĕz; Fr. brüzh)
Brutus (bro͞o′tŭs)
Bukharia (bū kä rē′ä)
Bulwer (bo͝ol′wẽr)
Burgundian (bûr gŭn′dĭ ăn)

Cacaphodel (cȧ cȧf′ō dĕl)
Cædmon (kăd′mŭn; kâd′mŭn)
Calaveras (kăl′ȧ vā′rȧs)
Camanches (same as Comanches)
Cambyses (kăm bī′sēz)
Campanella (käm′pä nĕl′lä)
Campbell (kăm′bĕl; kăm′ĕl)
Canterbury (kăn′tẽr bĕr ĭ)
Carthusian (kär thū′zhăn)
Cassandra (kă săn′ drȧ)
Castaly (kăs′tă lĭ)
Catalani (kä′tä lä′nē)
Cervantes (sẽr văn′tēz;
Sp. thĕr vän′tās)
Chaleur Bay (shȧ lo͞or′)
Chalkley (chäk′lĭ)
Chamfort (shäɴ′fŏr′)
Chartres (shȧr′tr′)
Chartreuse (shär′trûz′)
Chingachgook (chĭn gä go͞ok′)
Christiern (krĭs′tė ĕrn)
Christina (krĭs tē′nä)
Cochecho (cō chēk′ō)
Colossus (kȯ lŏs′ŭs)

Comanches (kȯ măn′chĕz)
Comstock (kŭm′stŏk)
Concord (kŏŋ′kŏrd)
Coureur-des-Bois (kōō′rûr′-dā-bwä′)
Cowley (kou′lĭ; formerly kōō′lĭ)
Craigie (krāg′ĭ)
Crayon, Geoffrey (jĕf′rĭ krā′ŏn)
Crébillon (krā′bē′yôɴ′)
Creoles (krē′ōlz)
Cyclops (sī′klŏps)

Dante (dăn′tė; It. dān′tā)
De Beranger (dẽ bā′räɴ′zhā′)
De la Chambre (dẽ′lä′shäɴ′br′)
Derby (där′bĭ)
De Sancto Matrimonio (mä trė mō′nė ō)
De Staël (stä′ĕl; Fr. dẽ stäl′)
Dion (dī′ŏn)
Directorium Inquisitorium (dē′rĕc tō′rĭ ûm ĭn′kwēz ē to′rĭ ŭm)
Divina Commedia (dė vē′nä kōm mā′dyȧ)
Dominican (dȯ mĭn′ĭ kăn)
Dominie Van Schaick, see Van Schaick
Dungaree Jack (dŭŋ′gȧ rē)
Dupin (dü′păɴ′)

Easter-Beurré (bû′rā′)
Eldorado (ĕl dȯ rä′dō)
Elysian (ė lĭzh′ăn)
Epaminondas (ė păm′ĭ nŏn′dăs)
Epicurean (ĕp′ĭ kū̇ rē′ăn)
Ethelred (ĕth′ĕl rĕd)
Eugenius (ū̇ jē′nĭ ŭs)
Eulalie, see Saint Eulalie
Euripides (ū̇ rĭp′ĭ dēz)
Eutaw (ū′tô)
Evangeline (ė văn′ jė lĭn)
Eymeric de Gironne (ī′ mĕr ĭk dẽ zhē′ rôn′)

Fata Morgana (fä′tä môr gä′nä)
Faubourg St. Germain (fō′bōōrg [Fr. fō′bōōr′săɴ] zhĕr măɴ′)
Faustus (fôs′tŭs)
Felician (fē lĭsh′ĭ ȧn)
Flud (flŭd)
Folinsbee (fŏl′ĭns bē)
Fontaine-qui-bout (fŏɴ′tān′ kḗ bōō′)
Fortunato (fōr tū nā′tō)
Fouqué (fōō′kā′)
Fuseli (fū′zė lĭ)

Gabriel Lajeunesse (lā zhẽ nĕs′)
Gambia (găm′bĭ ȧ)
Gardinier (gär′dĭ nĭ′ẽr)
Gascon (găs′kŏn)
Gaspereau (gās pẽ rọ̄′)
Gislebertus Crispinus (gĭs lĕ bĕr′tŭs crĭs pī′nŭs)
Gloucester (glŏs′tẽr)
Gotama (gō′tȧ mȧ)
Gothic (gŏth′ĭk)
Grand-Pré (grāɴ′prā′)
Great Mogul (mȯ gŭl′)
Grenada (grė nā′dȧ)
Gresset (grĕ′sĕ′)
Grizzly Cañon (kăn′yŭn)

Habersham (hăb′ẽr shăm)
Hagar (hā′gȧr)
Hamadryad (hăm′ȧ drī′ăd)
Hampden (hăm′dĕn)
Harleian (här lē′ăn)
Hawaiian (hä wī′yăn)
Heidegger (hī′dĕg ẽr)
Hercules (hûr′kū̇ lēz)
Hesiod (hē′sĭ ŏd)
Hesperius (hĕs pē′rĭ ŭs)
Hesperus (hĕs′pẽr ŭs)
Hiawatha (hī′ȧ wô′thȧ *or* hē′ȧ wô′thȧ)
Holberg (hȯl′bĕrᴋ)
Hotel des Invalides (ȯ′tĕl′ dā zăɴ′vȧ′lēd′)
Houri (hōō′rĭ)

Ibn Haukal (ĭb′n how′kôl)
Ichabod (ĭk′ȧ bŏd)
Iliad (ĭl′ĭ ăd)
Ishmael (ĭsh′mȧ ĕl)
Islam (ĭs′lȧm)
Israfel (ĭz′rȧ fēl; ĭz′rȧ fĕl)

Jaalam (jā′ȧ lăm)
Jargonelles (jär′gȯ nĕlz′)
Jean D'Indaginé (zhäɴ′ dăɴ′dä′zhĭn′ā′)
Joaquin (wä kēn′)

Kaaterskill (kô′tẽr skĭl)
Kaatskill (käts′kĭl)
Kanaka (kăn′ȧ kȧ; kȧ năk′ȧ)

Lanier (lă nēr′)
Laodamia (lȧ ŏd′ȧ mī′ȧ)
Las Mariposas (măr′ĭ pō′sȧs)
Launcelot (lôn′sė lŏt)
Launfal (län′făl; lôn′făl)
Laurens (lô′rĕns)
Le Bruyère (lȧ brü′yâr′)
Le Carillon de Dunkerque (lē kȧ′ri yôɴ′ dē dun′kĕrk′)
Lethean (lė thē′ăn)
Létiche (lā tēsh′)
Leyden (lī′dĕn)
Lilinau (lĭl′ĭ nô′)
Lochiel (lŏᴋ ēl′)
Louisburg (lo͞o′ĭ bûrg)
Loup-garou (lo͞o′gȧ′ro͞o′)
Luchesi (lû chā′sē)
Lutzen (lüt′sĕn)

Machiavelli (mä′kyä vĕl′lē)
Madeline (măd′ė lĭn)
Mænads (mē′nădz)
Magua (mä′gwä)
Mahomet (mȧ hŏm′ĕt)
Mainote (mī′nōt)
Manitou (măn′ĭ to͞o)
Maquas (mä′kwȧz)
Marseillaise (mär′sĕ lāz′; Fr. mȧr′sĕ′yâz′)
Martius (mär′shĭ ŭs)
Mazzini (mät sē′nē)
Medoc (mā′dŏk′)
Melesigenes (mĕl ĕ sĭj′ĕ nēs)
Melita (mĕl′ĭ tȧ; mĕ lē′tȧ)
Memphremagog (mĕm′frė mā′gŏg)
Messiah (mĕ sī′ȧ)
Methusalem (mė thū′sȧ lĕm)
Michael (mī′kĕl; Bib. mī′kȧ ĕl)
Midas (mī′dȧs)
Minas (mī′nȧs)
Minerva (mĭ nûr′vȧ)
Mizraim (mĭz′rȧ ĭm; mĭz rā′ ĭm)
Mohican (mȯ hē′kăn)
Montaigne (mŏn tān′; Fr. môɴ′tȧn′y′)
Montcalm (mŏnt käm′; Fr. môɴ kȧlm′)
Montreal (mŏnt′rė ôl′)
Montresor (Fr. môɴ′trā′sôr′)
Moravian (mȯ rā′vĭ ăn)
Mowis (mō′wēs)
Myrmidons (mûr′mĭ dŏnz)

Naiad (nā′yăd)
Natchitoches (năk′ĭ tŏsh′; năk′ĭ tŏsh′)
Natty Bumppo (bŭm′pō)
Nautilus (nô′tĭ lŭs)
Neapolitan (nē′ȧ pŏl′ĭ tăn)
Nelis (nĕl′ĭs)
Nemesis (nĕm′ė sĭs)
Nepenthe (nė pĕn′thė)
Nibelungen (nē′bĕ lo͞ong′ĕn)
Nicaragua (nĭk′ȧ rä′gwȧ)
Nicean (nī sē′ăn)

Odyssey (ŏd′ĭ sĭ)
Olaus Magnus (ō lā′ŭs)
Olympus (ȯ lĭm′pŭs)
Opelousas (ŏp′ė lo͞o′sȧs)
Oregon (ŏr′ė gŏn)
Orestes (ȯ rĕs′tēz)
Orion (ȯ rī′ŏn)
Owyhee (ȯ wī′hė)

Pache (păch′ė)
Patroclus (pȧ trō′klŭs)
Paumanok (paw mȧn′ŏk)
Pedro (pā′drō)
Pericles (pĕr′ĭ klēz)
Petruchio (pė tro͞o′chĭ ō; -kĭ ō)
Pharaoh (fā′rō; fā′rȧ ō)
Phidias (fĭd′ĭ ăs)
Philippi (fĭ lĭp′ī)
Phocion (fō′shĭ ŏn)
Physalia (fī sā′lĭ ȧ)
Pisa (pē′sä)
Piscataqua (pĭs kăt′ȧ kwȧ)
Pistoriensis (pĭs′tō rĭ en′sĭs)
Plaquemine, Bayou of (plăk′mēn′, bī′o͞o)
Plato (plā′tō)
Pleiads (plē′yădz)
Plotinus (plȯ tī′nŭs)
Plutarch (plo͞o′tärk)
Polycrates (pȯ lĭk′rȧ tēz)
Pomponius Mela (pŏm pō′nĭ ŭs mā′lȧ)
Porto Rique (pōr′tō′rēk′)
Prometheus (prȯ mē′thūs; commonly thė ŭs)
Prytaneum (prĭt′ȧ nē′ŭm)
Psyche (sī′kė)
Pythoness (pĭth′ȯ nĕs)

René Leblanc (rē nā′ lē blänk′)
Rhodora (rȯ dō′rȧ)
Rochefoucauld (rȯsh′fo͞o′kō′)
Roderick (rŏd′ẽr ĭk)
Rodrigo (rȯ drē′gō)
Roget (rȯ′zhā′)
Romulus (rŏm′ū̇ lŭs)
Roubillac (ro͞o′bē′yȧk′)
Rue Donot (Fr. ro͞o′ dŭn ō′)
Rue Morgue (Fr. ro͞o′mŏrg′)
Rutledge (rŭt′lĕj)

Sachem (sā′chĕm)
Saco (sô′kō)
Saginaw (săg′ĭ nô)
St. Bartholomew (bär thŏl′ȯ mū)
St. Bernard (bẽr närd′; Fr. săɴ bĕr′nȧr′)
Saint Eulalie (û′lȧ′lē′)
St. François (fräɴ′swä′)
St. Maur (mōr)
Saleratus Bill (săl′ė rā′tŭs)
Salisbury (sôlz′bẽr ĭ)
Sanchez (sän′chĕz)
Sappho (săf′ō)
Saracens (săr′ȧ sĕnz)
Satyr (săt′ẽr; sā′tẽr)
Scipio (sĭp′ĭ ō)
Sévigné (sā′vēn′yā′)
Shawnee (shô nē′)
Sibyllic (sĭ bĭl′ĭk)
Siegfried (sēg′frēd; Ger. tzēĸ′frēt)
Siena (sē ā′nä)
Sierras (sĭ ĕr′ȧz)
Sinai (sī′nī; sī′nā̇ ī)
Smyrna (smûr′nȧ)
Socrates (sŏk′rȧ tēz)
Sogd (sŏg)
Sophocles (sŏf′ȯ klēz)
Stoicism (stō′ĭ sĭz′m)
Strauss (shtrous)
Stuyvesant (stī′vĕ sănt)
Swedenborg (swē′dĕn bôrg)
Syrian (sĭr′ĭ ăn)

Tampa (tăm′pȧ)
Taygetos (tā ĭj′ĕ tŭs)
Taylor, Bayard (bā′ẽrd)
Têche (tĕsh)
Thanatopsis (thăn′ȧ tŏp′sĭs)
Thasians (thā′shĭ ănz)
Theagenes (thė ăj′ė nēz)
Themis (thē′mĭs)
Theocritus (thė ŏk′rĭ tŭs)
Thetis (thē′tĭs)
Thoreau (thō′rō; thō rō′)
Thyeste (thē′ĕst′)
Tieck (tēk)
Tithonus (tĭ thō′nŭs)
Tous le Bourgeois de Chartres (to͞o lā bo͞or zhwȧ dė shȧr′tr′)
Trojan (trō′jăn)

Uncas (ŭn′kȧs)
Upharsin (ū̇ fär′sĭn,
Urania (ū̇ rā′nĭ ȧ)
Usher (ŭsh′ẽr)

Valerio (vȧ lā′ rē ō)
Van Bummel (văn bŭm′ĕl)
Vanderdonck (văn′dẽr dŏnk)
Van Schaick, Dominie (dŏm′ĭ nĭ văn skoik′)
Vedder (vĕd′ẽr)
Ververt (vĕr′vĕr′)
Vigiliae Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiae Maguntinae (wė gė′lė ɨ môr tū̇ ō′ro͝om sĕko͝on′do͝om kō′ro͝om ĕk klā′sė ɨ mä go͝on tē′ nɨ)
Vitalis (vĭ tē′lĭs; vĭ tā′lĭs)
Vizetelli (vĭz′ĭ tĕl′ĭ)
Von Weber (fȯn vā′bẽr)
Voyageur (vwȧ′yȧ′zhûr′)

Wachita (wŏsh′ė taw)
Walleway (wŏl′ė wā)
Weir (wēr)
Wicaco (wĭ cä′cō)
Woden (wō′dĕn)

Xenophon (zĕn′ȯ fŏn)

Yaanek, Mount (yăn′ĕk)
Ypsilanti (ĭp′sė län′tė)

A BRIEF ESSAY ON ENGLISH METRICS

Rhythm. Poetry is written in measured rhythmical language. Meter means primarily measure; and rhythm means wave movement. A line of poetry, technically called a verse, is composed of individual wave movements which are called feet. In English poetry there are four basal rhythms or types of wave movement, namely, the iambic, the anapestic, the trochaic, the dactylic. The first two of these are called rising rhythms because they begin with an unstressed syllable and close with a stressed syllable, the iambic foot (⌣ /) being composed of one unstressed syllable and one stressed syllable, and the anapest (⌣ ⌣ /) being composed of two unstressed syllables and one stressed syllable. The other two basal rhythms are called falling because they begin with stressed syllables and close with unstressed syllables, the trochee (/ ⌣) being composed of one stressed and one unstressed syllable, and the dactyl (/ ⌣ ⌣) being composed of one stressed and two unstressed syllables. In addition to these basal rhythms we have two level or even rhythms which are sometimes substituted in a single foot for one of the regular types of rhythm in order to prevent monotony and add variety to the flow of the verse. The level or even rhythms are the pyrrhic (⌣ ⌣), composed of two light syllables, one of them taking a slight metrical stress according to the prevailing rhythm of the verse; and spondaic (— —), composed of two heavy or stressed syllables, one of them taking a slightly stronger stress than the other according to the prevailing type of rhythm employed. Both types of level stress may be illustrated by the verse,

⌣ ⌣ — — ⌣ / ⌣ /
By the | rude bridge | that arched | the flood.

The first foot is a pyrrhic, the second a spondee, and the third and fourth iambs. The even rhythms are sometimes spoken of as having divided or hovering stress, the voice, as it were, hovering over the two syllables or being evenly divided between them.

Summarizing, then, we find four fundamental types of rhythm and two occasional types of level or even rhythm, as follows:

RISING RHYTHMS	FALLING RHYTHMS
Iambic (⌣ /), as *compose*	Trochaic (/ ⌣), as *lily*
Anapestic (⌣ ⌣ /), as *undefiled*	Dactylic (/ ⌣ ⌣), as *whispering*

LEVEL RHYTHMS

Pyrrhic (⌣ ⌣), as *by the*

Spondaic (— —), as *rude bridge*

Pauses. Pauses frequently occur as a part of the rhythm of the verse, and sometimes they become an organic part of the verse structure, occurring at regular intervals throughout the lines. When a pause occurs within the verse, or line, it is called a *medial* or *cesural* pause. In the longer meters the cesural pause becomes organic, but in the shorter meters there is rarely a medial pause. If a natural rhetorical pause occurs at the end of a line, in which case it is usually, though not always, marked by some sign of punctuation, the line is said to be *end-stopped.* If no pause occurs at the end of the line, the line is said to be *run-on;* and in reading, the voice should be carried over to the next line with but the slightest break. Sometimes a pause occurs to take the place of an omitted syllable, or even to fill the time of several feet, and in such cases it is called a *compensating* pause. The following passages will illustrate the various kinds of pauses.

For the moon | never beams, || without bring | ing me dreams |
(medial pause) (run-on line)
Of my beau | tiful An | nabel Lee; || (end-stopped line)

'Twas down, | ∧ down, | straight down;
(compensating pause)

The breakers whisper under their breath || (end-stopped line)
∧ "Death, | ∧ Death!"
(compensating pauses)

Substitution and inversion. Another kind of irregularity frequently practiced by poets in order to give variety to the rhythm is the *substitution* of one type of foot for another. Either one of the rising rhythms may be freely substituted for the other, or either one of the falling rhythms may be substituted for the other, as iambic for anapestic, or trochaic for dactylic. If opposite types, that is a rising for a falling rhythm or *vice versa*, are substituted, as when a trochaic foot is used for an iambic, or a dactylic foot for an anapestic, or *vice versa*, the irregularity is called *inversion.* The first foot in the following quotation is an example of inversion.

/ ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ \ ⌣ /
Lifeless, | but beau | tiful, | he lay,

Inversion occurs almost invariably at the beginning of a line or immediately after a medial pause.

Anacrusis and catalexis. Occasionally an extra or hypermetrical light syllable is added at the beginning of a trochaic or dactylic line. This is called *anacrusis.* It occurs rarely, and will give the pupil little trouble. An example may be seen in the following trochaic line:

/ ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣
And | all with | pearl and | ruby | glowing.

Here the *and* may be disregarded in marking the scansion. Sometimes also the final syllable, or syllables, of trochaic or dactylic verse is omitted or cut off. This is called *catalexis*, and a verse which shows this irregularity is called catalectic. Catalexis occurs very frequently in trochaic tetrameter and makes what is sometimes called heptasyllabic (seven-syllabled) verse. The reason catalexis occurs so frequently in English trochaic rhythm is that the feminine rimes are sometimes difficult to find. Examples of catalexis will be found in the quotations on pp. 634–635.

Feminine ending. Another common variation is the addition of one or sometimes two unstressed syllables at the end of an iambic or anapestic foot. The addition occurs rarely just before a medial pause and frequently at the end of the line. When it occurs at the end of the line, it is called *feminine ending*. The extra syllable should not be counted as part of a new foot, but merely as an additional syllable in the foot to which it is attached. The following is an example of feminine ending:

Thĕ dáy | ĭs cóld | ănd dárk | ănd dréary̆

Stress. *Metrical stress* is usually determined by the ordinary etymological pronunciation of the words. The three degrees of stress are denominated primary, secondary, and no-stress; these may all be illustrated in a single word, as *póndĕròus*, the primary stress being ordinarily marked by the acute accent (/), the secondary by the grave accent (\), and the light or no-stress syllable by the breve (⌣). In the following line the syllable *in* receives the secondary stress, the syllables *found*, *fresh*, *do*, and *woods* take the primary stress, and the remaining syllables are light or unstressed.

Ĭ fóund | thĕ frésh | Rhŏdó | ră ìn | thĕ wóods.

Hovering or divided stress has already been explained under the terms pyrrhic and spondaic in the discussion of the various kinds of rhythm above. These stresses may be indicated by the double breve and double macron respectively, with a grave accent over the heavier syllable, as (⌣ ⌣̀) and (— —̀).

Wrenched accent. Ordinarily the regular prose or etymological pronunciation of the word determines its metrical pronunciation, but occasionally the metrical stress prevails over the word stress, and we have what is known as *wrenched accent*. An example of this may be found in "The Haunted Palace":

In the greenest of our valleys
  By good angels tenan*tèd*,
Once a fair and stately palace —
  Radiant palace — reared its head.

Here the syllable *-ted* in *tenanted* receives a primary instead of a secondary accent in order to bring out clearly the rime with *head*.

Sometimes syllables which are not pronounced or accented in prose take a light or even a secondary stress on account of the meter. The commonest example of this is the pronunciation of the final syllable *-ed* in such words as *loved*, *winged*, *blessed*. This is another case in which the metrical stress prevails over the ordinary pronunciation; and to make sure that the proper rhythmic pronunciation is given, the editors of most modern books mark such syllables with a grave accent, as *lovèd*.

Slurring. Syllables are sometimes slurred or run together when two vowels are conjoined, as in *ponderous*, pronounced in two syllables. Slurring may also occur between words if one ends and the other begins with an open sound, as

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore

Here *many a* is pronounced in two syllables, as if written *manya*. The two unaccented syllables in *curious* are pronounced very quickly, so as to consume the time of but one short syllable. Closely akin to slurring are the poetical contractions which are allowable in such words as *e'en*, *e'er*, *o'er*, and *'tis*, for *even*, *ever*, *over*, and *it is*. On the other hand some words may be pronounced as two syllables instead of one, such as *real*, *fire*, and the like, as in the following examples:

> Life is *re-al*, life is earnest
>
> In mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic *fi-re*,
> Leaping higher, higher, *high-er*.

Meter. The length of the line or verse, that is, the number of feet it contains, determines the meter. Lines range from one foot to eight, and are called, respectively, monometer, dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, pentameter, hexameter, heptameter, octameter; or one-stress, two-stress, etc.

To designate the meter of a selection, the pupil should give the typical rhythm or kind of foot, the number of feet, and such irregularities as may be necessary to describe the verse adequately. The following list of typical meters is by no means exhaustive.

(1) Anapestic monometer:

⌣ ⌣ /
They are Ghouls

(2) Iambic dimeter:

⌣ / ⌣ /
If I | could dwell
⌣ / ⌣ /
Where Is | ra fel

(3) Iambic trimeter:

⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ /
That sailed | the win | try sea

(4) Anapestic trimeter:

⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ /
'T is the part | of a cow | ard to brood

(5) Iambic tetrameter with feminine ending:

⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣
The day | is cold | and dark | and dreary

(6) Anapestic tetrameter:

⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ /
O'er the land | of the free | and the home | of the brave

(7) Trochaic tetrameter:

/ ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣
Tell me | not in | mournful | numbers

(8) Dactylic tetrameter catalectic:

/ ⌣⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ /
Merrily | swinging on | brier and | weed

(9) Iambic pentameter, blank verse:

⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ / ⌣ /
To him | who in | the love | of Na | ture holds

(10) Iambic pentameter, heroic couplet:

⌣ / ⌣ / / ⌣ ⌣ / — \
Now far, | now near, || borne as | the soft | winds will,
/ ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ \ ⌣ / ⌣ /
Comes the | low rush | ing of | the wa | ter-mill.

(11) Dactylic hexameter, with cesural pause:

/ ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ / ⌣ ⌣ — —
This is the | forest pri | meval. || The | murmuring | pines and the | hemlocks

(12) Iambic heptameter with medial pause:

˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
The mel | ancho | ly days | have come, || the sad | dest of | the year

(13) Trochaic octameter with cesural pause and internal rime:

/ ˘ \ ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘
Once up | on a | midnight | dreary, || while I | ponder'd | weak and | weary

(14) Trochaic octameter catalectic:

/ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ \ ˘ / ˘ /
Over | many a | quaint and | curious | volume | of for | gotten | lore

The longer meters, such as the heptameter, or seven-stress, and the octameter, or eight-stress, are frequently broken up into two verses, four-stress + three-stress, and four-stress + four-stress respectively. When broken in this way, the iambic heptameter gives the common ballad meter, as seen in the old Scottish ballad "Sir Patrick Spence" (p. 549), in "The Wreck of the Hesperus" (p. 238), and "In School-Days" (p. 277).

Stanzas. The stanza (commonly but inaccurately called verse) is composed of any number of lines from two upward. Stanzas are described by giving the number of lines and by indicating the arrangement of the rimes. A two-line stanza is called a couplet, a three-line stanza a triplet or tercet, and a four-line stanza is frequently called a quatrain. We also have five-, six-, seven-, eight-, and nine-line stanzas. The Spenserian stanza is a nine-line stanza riming *ababbcbcc*, the first eight lines being iambic pentameter and the ninth line being iambic hexameter. No example of the Spenserian stanza occurs in this book.

Sonnet. The sonnet is a poem consisting of fourteen lines of iambic five-stress verse, the rimes being arranged according to a definite, yet somewhat widely varying, scheme. This verse form was introduced from the Italian by Sir Thomas Wyatt in the sixteenth century, and under the improved forms practiced by his friend and co-author, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, the sonnet became extremely popular toward the end of the century. When the original Italian models are more or less closely followed, we have what is called the regular or Italian sonnet. This consists of an octave, or eight lines, usually made up on two rime sounds, as *abbaabba;* and a sextet or six lines, usually arranged in two tercets, or three-line groups, on two or three rimes variously interlaced, as *cde cde; cdc dcd*, etc. Occasionally a third and even a fourth rime is introduced in the octave, and this leads to the English or irregular sonnet, sometimes called also the Shakespearean sonnet, because Shakespeare practiced this form exclusively. It consists of three quatrains with a final couplet, the rime scheme usually running *abab, cdcd, efef, gg.*

Rime. Rime is one of the chief devices for binding or fixing the form of the stanza. If the rime follows in immediate sequence, we call it couplet, triplet, and so forth. Whittier's "Maud Muller" is written in couplets, and Longfellow's "Maidenhood" in triplets. When the rime occurs on every other line, we call it alternate, and when a quatrain shows the first and fourth lines riming and the second and third, we call this inclosed rime. The combinations and arrangements of rime schemes are so numerous that it is impossible to treat them here. As to form, rime is called masculine when only one syllable rimes, and feminine when two or more syllables rime. For example, *hand—land* is a masculine rime, while *tender—slender* and *tenderly—slenderly* are feminine rimes. When a word in the middle of a line rimes with another at or near the end of the line, we call this internal rime. Sometimes internal rime becomes organic; that is, it occurs regularly at certain places in the verse. An identical or perfect rime is the exact repetition of the sound of an entire syllable, including the initial consonant, as *week—weak*. This is usually considered a blemish, but it is sometimes permitted. A good method of indicating the rime scheme of a stanza is to write out a formula, using small letters for masculine rimes and capital letters for feminine rimes, as (1) trochaic tetrameter, *AbAb* ("A Psalm of Life"); (2) dactylic tetrameter catalectic, *ababccdde* ("Robert of Lincoln"); (3) anapestic trimeter, *AbbAcAcAc* ("Ulalume"); (4) iambic dimeter (1, 2, 4, 5) and trimeter (3, 6), *aaBccB* ("Eldorado"); (5) iambic trimeter (1, 4) and pentameter (2, 3), *abab* ("To a Waterfowl").

Blank verse. Any verse which does not rime may be called blank, but the term *blank verse* is applied specifically to unrimed iambic pentameter, as in Bryant's "Thanatopsis."

LATER
AMERICAN WRITERS

PART TWO

of SELECTIONS *from* AMERICAN LITERATURE

By

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THE INTRODUCTION

Literature is a going, growing thing. All of the great literature of the past is our heritage; but each new age must add its quota to the accumulated store of literary art. In our study and appreciation of the art of the past we must not entirely neglect or ignore the literature of our own day; nor in our enthusiasm for the new should we ever allow ourselves to forget the old or cast slurs upon it because it happens to be now somewhat out of style. The spirit of real art is universal and everlasting. The mode or manner of expression changes from age to age, but the fundamental principles of art remain unchanged. The form which is attractive to one generation becomes out-moded, *passé*, old-fashioned to another, but the spirit underlying any given work of art is "not of an age but for all time." So we may look forward to the time when the present so-called "new poetry" will be the old, the out-moded, the cast-off fashion of a bygone age. But if our present-day writers are true to the fundamental principles of real art, the best of their productions, in spite of the fact that always new forms will continue to appear, will last from generation to generation. So while we should always be tolerant of the older art forms and study them in the spirit of the age in which they were created, we should also be responsive, within moderation of course, to the new, remembering that our own age must submit to the Time Spirit, which will eventually winnow out of the vast mass of chaff the few pure grains of permanent art which posterity shall cherish as our contribution to the accumulated store of the literary treasures of the race.

We are constantly reminded of our inability to see the real values of the art productions of our own age. We have not that judicial perspective, that clear and unobstructed backward view with which posterity shall be able to judge our works. Now we can only guess at what is good, what is permanent; but it is our plain duty to express our own judgments and preferences, so that later students of the literature of our time may at least know what we thought was good, what we were most partial to, what we ourselves most enjoyed. It is a delightful, though often tantalizing, task to attempt to sift from the many thousands a few of the poems and stories and essays which we think possess the time-resisting qualities.

The literature of any given time is the literature closest to the hearts of the people of that time. We are sometimes painfully conscious that the productions of the writers of our day seem pitifully small and insignificant when measured by the productions of past ages. But we must remember that judgments of art are after all relative. If we are to compare the authors of the last fifteen or twenty years with the authors of the last thousand or even the last hundred years, we must constantly keep in mind that relatively we should hardly expect to find any large number of lasting figures in our brief generation. Carlyle has reminded us that it sometimes takes hundreds of years to produce a single great writer. It may be that out of the first quarter of the twentieth century, when Time has thrice-winnowed our present-day writers, not one will emerge to take his place among the world's great writers. But this thought should not deter us from making a study of the writers of our own time. We should at least be on the lookout for a master spirit, for there is no telling when a greater genius than has ever yet blessed our literature will appear. It is at least thrilling to stand on the upper slopes and watch expectantly for a new star to rise in our literary firmament.

So we may take up the study of our later writers with both hope and doubt, with that very pleasant feeling of suspense which thrills us as we approach the unknown. In making selections from the later American writers, the editor has had his moments of hope and his moments of doubt, but it is only fair to say that his confidence in the constant progress of art has made his hopes predominate over his doubts as each of the following selections was culled from the great mass of material which lay before him.

Not that he has had an altogether free hand, however. The restrictions of a textbook-maker are many and sometimes almost overwhelmingly discouraging. There is the problem of his audience—what poems are most suitable for his readers? Then there is the problem of space limitation—what significant selections can be crowded into his limited number of pages? There are also the problems of variety, and taste, and morals, and religion, and sectionalism, and racial antipathy, and personal preference, and school-book boards, and cost, and competition, and practical pedagogy. And above all there is the restriction, in the case of contemporary literature, of the copyright, the author's and the publisher's permission to reprint. Many are the woes of the anthologist, but happy is his lot if he is able, at least partially, to overcome all obstacles and reach his audience. In the present case the editor is happy to say that the authors, almost without exception, have been gracious and sympathetic; and the publishers, usually with a moderate financial stipulation, have been exceedingly generous in granting permission to reprint copyrighted material, for all of which the editor and the publishers are duly grateful and herewith make formal acknowledgment of indebtedness.

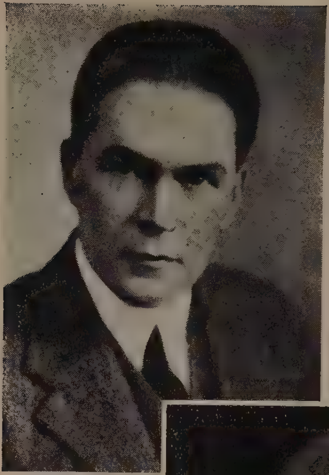
The preceding volume, *Selections from American Literature*, covers the chief writers from Washington Irving to William Vaughn Moody, or roughly chronologically from about 1800 to about 1900. The present section, Part Two, covers, inadequately to be sure and with lapses of judgment both as to exclusion and inclusion, the writings of those who have emerged since the dawn of the twentieth century, or in round numbers from 1901 to 1926. There is some overlapping of course. A few writers whose dates place them inevitably in the nineteenth century, like Stephen Crane and Emily Dickinson, for example, have but lately emerged into their rightful fame; and a few others could not be conveniently fitted into the plan of the original book, and hence they have been included here.

To meet the situation, to bridge as effectually as possible the gap between the original *Selections from American Literature* and these *Selections from Later American Writers*, we have placed first the prose selections, both story and essay, ranging from Ambrose Bierce to Christopher Morley. Then follows the "Transitional Poets" from Emily Dickinson to Madison Cawein. The central group, "Voices of the New America," includes the five men generally recognized as the major modern poets, Robinson, Frost, Sandburg, Masters, and Lindsay. The "Imagists," three American poets—Amy Lowell, H. D., and John Gould Fletcher—who contributed to the three annual volumes called *Some Imagist Poets* (1915, 1916, 1917), form the next group, though selections from their productions have not been limited to the poems contributed to the annual anthologies which they sponsored. Then comes a larger group, "The Lyrists," including a few of the prominent recent poets who have written minor—*minor* only in Poe's sense of *short*—poems of distinction. Finally we come to the more advanced group of recent poets, those who are trying out many radical and novel verse forms, new patterns, and new themes; these we have frankly called "The Experimenters." We can by no means be sure that the work of the more radical poets will survive except as curiosities or as evidence of the daring and adventurous spirit of the innovators; but this fact does not lessen our interest in their efforts, nor should it prevent us from making at least an introductory study of their novel productions.

I wish here to record my indebtedness to several of my friends and colleagues who have assisted me in making the selections. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Mr. Walter F. Kohn, formerly with Rand McNally & Co. He not only assisted me in selecting the material but helped me very greatly in grouping the poets and in interpreting the work of the "Experimenters."

L. W. PAYNE, JR.

Austin, Texas
September 25, 1926



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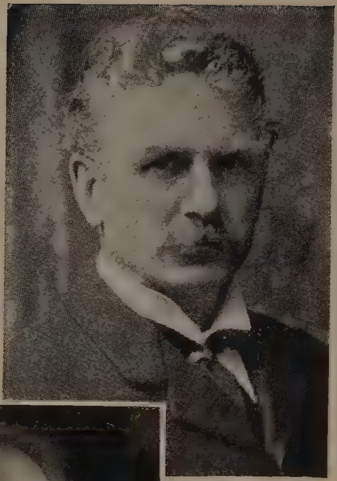

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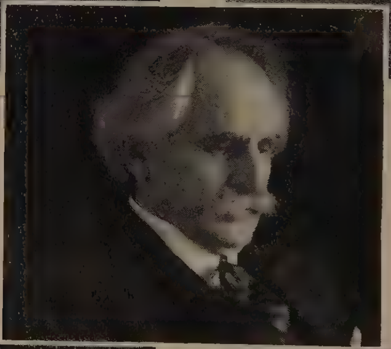

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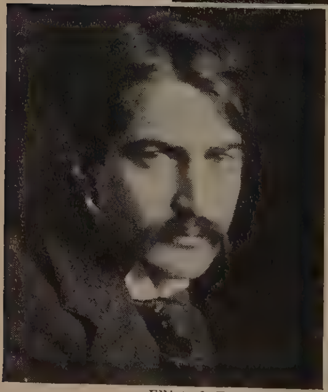

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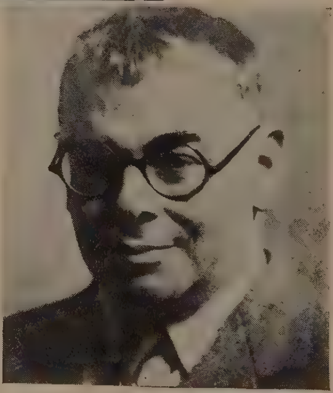

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PROSE WRITERS

SELECTIONS FROM THE LATER AMERICAN WRITERS

SHORT STORIES AND ESSAYS

Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?)

A HORSEMAN IN THE SKY

I

One sunny afternoon in the autumn of the year 1861 a soldier lay in a clump of laurel by the side of a road in western Virginia. He lay at full length upon his stomach, his feet resting upon the toes, his head upon the left forearm. His extended right hand loosely grasped his rifle. But for the somewhat methodical disposition of his limbs and a slight rhythmic movement of the cartridge-box at the back of his belt, he might have been thought to be dead. He was asleep at his post of duty. But if detected he would be dead shortly afterward, death being the just and legal penalty of his crime.

The clump of laurel in which the criminal lay was in the angle of a road which, after ascending southward a steep acclivity to that point, turned sharply to the west, running along the summit for perhaps one hundred yards. There it turned southward again and went zigzagging downward through the forest. At the salient of that second angle was a large flat rock, jutting out northward, overlooking the deep valley from which the road ascended. The rock capped a high cliff; a stone dropped from its outer edge would have fallen sheer downward one thousand feet to the tops of the pines. The angle where the soldier lay was on another spur of the same cliff. Had he been awake, he would have commanded a view not only of the short arm of the road and the jutting rock but of the entire profile of the cliff below it. It might well have made him giddy to look.

The country was wooded everywhere except at the bottom of the valley to the northward, where there was a small natural meadow, through which flowed a stream scarcely visible from the valley's rim. This open ground looked hardly larger than an ordinary door-yard, but was really several acres in extent. Its green was more vivid than that of the inclosing forest. Away beyond it rose a line of giant cliffs similar to those upon which we are supposed to stand in our survey of the savage scene, and through which the road had somehow made its climb to the summit. The configuration of the valley, indeed, was such that from this point of observation it seemed entirely shut in, and one could but have wondered how the road which found a way out of it had found a way into it, and whence came and whither went the waters of the stream that parted the meadow more than a thousand feet below.

No country is so wild and difficult but men will make it a theatre of war; concealed in the forest at the bottom of that military rat-trap, in which half a hundred men in possession of the exits might have starved an army to submission, lay five regiments of Federal infantry. They had marched all the previous day and night and were resting. At nightfall they would take to the road again, climb to the place where their unfaithful sentinel now slept, and descending the other slope of the ridge fall upon a camp of the enemy at about midnight. Their hope was to surprise it, for the road led to the rear of it. In case of failure, their position would be perilous in the extreme; and fail they surely would should an accident or vigilance apprise the enemy of the movement.

II

The sleeping sentinel in the clump of laurel was a young Virginian named Carter Druse. He was the son of wealthy parents, an only child, and had known such ease and cultivation and high living as wealth and taste were able to command in the mountain country of western Virginia.

His home was but a few miles from where he now lay. One morning he had risen from the breakfast-table and said, quietly but gravely: "Father, a Union regiment has arrived at Grafton. I am going to join it."

The father lifted his leonine head, looked at the son a moment in silence, and replied: "Well, go, sir, and whatever may occur, do what you conceive to be your duty. Virginia, to which you are a traitor, must get on without you. Should we both live to the end of the war, we will speak further of the matter. Your mother, as the physician has informed you, is in a most critical condition; at the best she cannot be with us longer than a few weeks, but that time is precious. It would be better not to disturb her."

So Carter Druse, bowing reverently to his father, who returned the salute with a stately courtesy that masked a breaking heart, left the home of his childhood to go soldiering. By conscience and courage, by deeds of devotion and daring, he soon commended himself to his fellows and his officers; and it was to these qualities and to some knowledge of the country that he owed his selection for his present perilous duty at the extreme outpost. Nevertheless, fatigue had been stronger than resolution, and he had fallen asleep. What good or bad angel came in a dream to rouse him from his state of crime, who shall say? Without a movement, without a sound, in a profound silence and the languor of the late afternoon, some invisible messenger of fate touched with unsealing finger the eyes of his consciousness—whispered into the ear of his spirit the mysterious awakening word which no human lips ever have spoken, no human memory ever has recalled. He quietly raised his forehead from his arm and looked between the masking stems of the laurels, instinctively closing his right hand about the stock of his rifle.

His first feeling was a keen artistic delight. On a colossal pedestal, the cliff—motionless at the extreme edge of the capping rock and sharply outlined against the sky—was an equestrian statue of impressive dignity. The figure of the man sat on the figure of the horse, straight and soldierly, but with the repose of a Grecian god carved in the marble which limits the suggestion of activity. The gray costume harmonized with its aerial background; the metal of accoutrement and caparison was softened and subdued by the shadow; the animal's skin had no points of high light. A carbine, strikingly foreshortened, lay across the pommel of the saddle, kept in place by the right hand grasping it at the "grip"; the left hand, holding the bridle rein, was invisible. In silhouette against the sky the profile of the horse was cut with the sharpness of a cameo; it looked across the heights of air to the confronting cliffs beyond. The face of the rider, turned slightly away, showed only an outline of temple and beard; he was looking downward to the bottom of the valley. Magnified by its lift against the sky and by the soldier's testifying sense of the formidableness of a near enemy the group appeared of heroic, almost colossal, size.

For an instant Druse had a strange, half-defined feeling that he had slept to the end of the war and was looking upon a noble work of art reared upon that eminence to commemorate the deeds of an heroic past of which he had been an inglorious part. The feeling was dispelled by a slight movement of the group: the horse, without moving its feet, had drawn its body slightly backward from the verge; the man remained immobile as before. Broad awake and keenly alive to the significance of the situation, Druse now brought the butt of his rifle against his cheek by cautiously pushing the barrel forward through the bushes, cocked the piece, and, glancing through the sights, covered a vital spot of the horseman's breast. A touch upon the trigger and all would have been well with Carter Druse. At that instant the horseman turned his head and looked in the direction of his concealed foeman—seemed to look into his very face, into his eyes, into his brave, compassionate heart.

Is it then so terrible to kill an enemy in war—an enemy who has surprised a secret vital to the safety of one's self and comrades—an enemy more formidable for his knowledge than all his army for its numbers? Carter Druse grew pale; he shook in every limb, turned faint, and saw the statuesque group before him as black figures, rising, falling, moving unsteadily in arcs of circles in a fiery sky. His hand fell away from his weapon, his head slowly dropped until his face rested on the leaves in which he lay. This courageous gentleman and hardy soldier was near swooning from intensity of emotion.

It was not for long; in another moment his face was raised from earth; his hands resumed their places on the rifle, his forefinger sought the trigger; mind, heart, and eyes were clear, conscience and reason sound. He could not hope to capture that enemy; to alarm him would but send him dashing to his camp with his fatal news. The duty of the soldier was plain: the man must be shot dead from ambush—without warning, without a moment's spiritual preparation, with never so much as an unspoken prayer, he must be sent to his account. But no—there is a hope; he may have discovered nothing—perhaps he is but admiring the sublimity of the landscape. If permitted, he may turn and ride carelessly away in the direction whence he came. Surely it will be possible to judge at the instant of his withdrawing whether he knows. It may well be that his fixity of attention—Druse turned his head and looked through the deeps of air downward, as from the surface to the bottom of a translucent sea. He saw creeping across the green meadow a sinuous line of figures of men and horses—some foolish commander was permitting the soldiers of his escort to water their beasts in the open, in plain view from a dozen summits!

Druse withdrew his eyes from the valley and fixed them again upon the group of man and horse in the sky, and again it was through the sights of his rifle. But this time his aim was at the horse. In his memory, as if they were a divine mandate, rang the words of his father at their parting: "Whatever may occur, do what you conceive to be your duty." He was calm now. His teeth were firmly but not rigidly closed; his nerves were as tranquil as a sleeping babe's—not a tremor affected any muscle of his body; his breathing, until suspended in the act of taking aim, was regular and slow. Duty had conquered; the spirit had said to the body: "Peace, be still." He fired.

III

An officer of the Federal force, who in a spirit of adventure or in quest of knowledge had left the hidden *bivouac* in the valley and with aimless feet had made his way to the lower edge of a small open space near the foot of the cliff, was considering what he had to gain by pushing his exploration further. At a distance of a quarter-mile before him, but apparently at a stone's throw, rose from its fringe of pines the gigantic face of rock, towering to so great a height above him that it made him giddy to look up to where its edge cut a sharp, rugged line against the sky. It presented a clean, vertical profile against a background of blue sky to a point half the way down, and of distant hills, hardly less blue, thence to the tops of the trees at its base. Lifting his eyes to the dizzy altitude of its summit, the officer saw an astonishing sight—a man on horseback riding down into the valley through the air!

Straight upright sat the rider, in military fashion, with a firm seat in the saddle, a strong clutch upon the rein to hold his charger from too impetuous a plunge. From his bare head his long hair streamed upward, waving like a plume. His hands were concealed in the cloud of the horse's lifted mane. The animal's body was as level as if every hoof-stroke encountered the resistant earth. Its motions were those of a wild gallop, but even as the officer looked they ceased, with all the legs thrown sharply forward as in the act of alighting from a leap. But this was a flight!

Filled with amazement and terror by this apparition of a horseman in the sky—half believing himself the chosen scribe of some new Apocalypse, the officer was overcome by the intensity of his emotions; his legs failed him and he fell. Almost at the same instant he heard a crashing sound in the trees—a sound that died without an echo—and all was still.

The officer rose to his feet, trembling. The familiar sensation of an abraded shin recalled his dazed faculties. Pulling himself together, he ran rapidly obliquely away from the cliff to a point distant from its foot; thereabout he expected to find his man; and thereabout he naturally failed. In the fleeting instant of his vision his imagination had been so wrought upon by the apparent grace and ease and intention of the marvelous performace that it did not occur to him that the line of march of aerial cavalry is directly downward, and that he could find the objects of his search at the very foot of the cliff. A half-hour later he returned to camp.

This officer was a wise man; he knew better than to tell an incredible truth. He said nothing of what he had seen. But when the commander asked him if in his scout he had learned anything of advantage to the expedition he answered:

"Yes, sir; there is no road leading down into this valley from the southward."

The commander, knowing better, smiled.

IV

After firing his shot, Private Carter Druse reloaded his rifle and resumed his watch. Ten minutes had hardly passed when a Federal sergeant crept cautiously to him on hands and knees. Druse neither turned his head nor looked at him, but lay without motion or sign or recognition.

"Did you fire?" the sergeant whispered.

"Yes."

"At what?"

"A horse. It was standing on yonder rock—pretty far out. You see it is no longer there. It went over the cliff."

The man's face was white, but he showed no other sign of emotion. Having answered, he turned away his eyes and said no more. The sergeant did not understand.

"See here, Druse," he said, after a moment's silence, "it's no use making a mystery. I order you to report. Was there anybody on the horse?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"My father."

The sergeant rose to his feet and walked away. "Good God!" he said.

Ambrose Bierce

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Stephen Crane (1870-1900)

A YOUNG SOLDIER'S FIRST BATTLE

There were moments of waiting. The youth thought of the village street at home before the arrival of the circus parade on a day in the spring. He remembered how he had stood, a small, thrillful boy, prepared to follow the dingy lady upon the white horse, or the band in its faded chariot. He saw the yellow road, the lines of expectant people, and the sober houses. He particularly remembered an old fellow who used to sit upon a cracker box in front of the store and feign to despise such exhibitions. A thousand details of color and form surged in his mind. The old fellow upon the cracker box appeared in middle prominence.

Some one cried, "Here they come!"

There was rustling and muttering among the men. They displayed a feverish desire to have every possible cartridge ready to their hands. The boxes were pulled around into various positions, and adjusted with great care. It was as if seven hundred new bonnets were being tried on.

The tall soldier, having prepared his rifle, produced a red handkerchief of some kind. He was engaged in knitting it about his throat with exquisite attention to its position, when the cry was repeated up and down the line in a muffled roar of sound.

"Here they come! Here they come!" Gun locks clicked.

Across the smoke-infested fields came a brown swarm of running men who were giving shrill yells. They came on, stooping and swinging their rifles at all angles. A flag, tilted forward, sped near the front.

As he caught sight of them the youth was momentarily startled by a thought that perhaps his gun was not loaded. He stood trying to rally his faltering intellect so that he might recollect the moment when he had loaded, but he could not.

A hatless general pulled his dripping horse to a stand near the colonel of the 304th. He shook his fist in the other's face. "You've got to hold 'em back!"

In his agitation the colonel began to stammer. "A-all r-right, General, all right, by Gawd! We-we'll do our-we-we'll-d-d-do-our best, General." The general made a passionate gesture and galloped away. The colonel, perchance to relieve his feelings, began to scold like a wet parrot. The youth, turning swiftly to make sure that the rear was unmolested, saw the commander regarding his men in a highly resentful manner, as if he regretted above everything his association with them.

The man at the youth's elbow was mumbling, as if to himself: "Oh, we're in for it now! oh, we're in for it now!"

The captain of the company had been pacing excitedly to and fro in the rear. He coaxed in schoolmistress fashion, as to a congregation of boys with primers. His talk was an endless repetition. "Reserve your fire, boys—don't shoot till I tell you—save your fire—wait till they get close up—don't be fools—"

Perspiration streamed down the youth's face, which was soiled like that of a weeping urchin. He frequently, with a nervous movement, wiped his eyes with his coat sleeve. His mouth was still a little way open.

He got the one glance at the foe-swarming field in front of him, and instantly ceased to debate the question of his piece being loaded. Before he was to begin—before he had announced to himself that he was about to fight—he threw the obedient, well-balanced rifle into position and fired a first wild shot. Directly he was working at his weapon like an automatic affair.

He suddenly lost concern for himself, and forgot to look at a menacing fate. He became not a man but a member. He felt that something of which he was a part—a regiment, an army, a cause, or a country—was in a crisis. He was welded into a common personality which was dominated by a single desire. For some moments he could flee no more than a little finger can commit a revolution from a hand.

If he had thought the regiment was about to be annihilated, perhaps he could have amputated himself from it. But its noise gave him assurance. The regiment was like a firework that, once ignited, proceeds superior to circumstances until its blazing vitality fades. It wheezed and banged with a mighty power. He pictured the ground before it as strewn with the discomfited.

There was a consciousness always of the presence of his comrades about him. He felt the subtle battle brotherhood more potent even than the cause for which they were fighting. It was a mysterious fraternity born of the smoke and danger of death.

He was at a task. He was like a carpenter who has made many boxes, making still another box, only there was furious haste in his movements. He, in his thought, was careering off in other places, even as the carpenter who as he works whistles and thinks of his friend or his enemy, his home or a saloon. And these jolted dreams were never perfect to him afterward, but remained a mass of blurred shapes.

Presently he began to feel the effects of the war atmosphere—a blistering sweat, a sensation that his eyeballs were about to crack like hot stones. A burning roar filled his ears.

Following this came a red rage. He developed the acute exasperation of a pestered animal, a well-meaning cow worried by dogs. He had a mad feeling against his rifle, which could only be used against one life at a time. He wished to rush forward and strangle with his fingers. He craved a power that would enable him to make a world-sweeping gesture and brush all back. His impotency appeared to him, and made his rage into that of a driven beast.

Buried in the smoke of many rifles his anger was directed not so much against the men whom he knew were rushing toward him as against the swirling battle phantoms which were choking him, stuffing their smoke robes down his parched throat. He fought frantically for respite for his senses, for air, as a babe being smothered attacks the deadly blankets.

There was a blare of heated rage mingled with a certain expression of intentness on all faces. Many of the men were making low-toned noises with their mouths, and these subdued cheers, snarls, imprecations, prayers, made a wild, barbaric song that went as an undercurrent of sound, strange and chantlike with the resounding chords of the war march. The man at the youth's elbow was babbling. In it there was something soft and tender like the monologue of a babe. The tall soldier was swearing in a loud voice. From his lips came a black procession of curious oaths. Of a sudden another broke out in a querulous way like a man who has mislaid his hat. "Well, why don't they support us? Why don't they send supports? Do they think —"

The youth in his battle sleep heard this as one who dozes hears.

There was a singular absence of heroic poses. The men bending and surging in their haste and rage were in every impossible attitude. The steel ramrods clanked and clanged with incessant din as the men pounded them furiously into the hot rifle barrels. The flaps of the cartridge boxes were all unfastened, and bobbed idiotically with each movement. The rifles, once loaded, were jerked to the shoulder and fired without apparent aim into the smoke or at one of the blurred and shifting forms which upon the field before the regiment had been growing larger and larger like puppets under a magician's hand.

The officers, at their intervals, rearward, neglected to stand in their picturesque attitudes. They were bobbing to and fro, roaring directions and encouragements. The dimensions of their howls were extraordinary. They expended their lungs with prodigal wills. And often they nearly stood upon their heads in their anxiety to observe the enemy on the other side of the tumbling smoke.

The lieutenant of the youth's company had encountered a soldier who had fled screaming at the first volley of his comrades. Behind the lines these two were acting a little isolated scene. The man was blubbering and staring with sheep-like eyes at the lieutenant, who had seized him by the collar and was pommeling him. He drove him back into the ranks with many blows. The soldier went mechanically, dully, with his animal-like eyes upon the officer. Perhaps there was to him a divinity expressed in the voice of the other—stern, hard, with no reflection of fear in it. He tried to reload his gun, but his shaking hands prevented. The lieutenant was obliged to assist him.

The men dropped here and there like bundles. The captain of the youth's company had been killed in an early part of the action. His body lay stretched out in the position of a tired man resting, but upon his face there was an astonished and sorrowful look, as if he thought some friend had done him an ill turn. The babbling man was grazed by a shot that made the blood stream widely down his face. He clapped both hands to his head. "Oh!" he said, and ran. Another grunted suddenly as if he had been struck by a club in the stomach. He sat down and gazed ruefully. In his eyes there was mute, indefinite reproach. Farther up the line a man, standing behind a tree, had had his knee joint splintered by a ball. Immediately he had dropped his rifle and gripped the tree with both arms. And there he remained, clinging desperately and crying for assistance that he might withdraw his hold upon the tree.

At last an exultant yell went along the quivering line. The firing dwindled from an uproar to a last vindictive popping. As the smoke slowly eddied away, the youth saw that the charge had been repulsed. The enemy were scattered into reluctant groups. He saw a man climb to the top of the fence, straddle the rail, and fire a parting shot. The waves had receded, leaving bits of dark *débris* upon the ground.

Some in the regiment began to whoop frenziedly. Many were silent. Apparently they were trying to contemplate themselves.

After the fever had left his veins, the youth thought that at last he was going to suffocate. He became aware of the foul atmosphere in which he had been struggling. He was grimy and dripping like a laborer in a foundry. He grasped his canteen and took a long swallow of the warmed water.

A sentence with variations went up and down the line. "Well, we've helt 'em back. We've helt 'em back; derned if we haven't." The men said it blissfully, leering at each other with dirty smiles.

The youth turned to look behind him and off to the right and off to the left. He experienced the joy of a man who at last finds leisure in which to look about him.

Under foot there were a few ghastly forms motionless. They lay twisted in fantastic contortions. Arms were bent and heads were turned in incredible ways. It seemed that the dead men must have fallen from some great height to get into such positions. They looked to be dumped out upon the ground from the sky.

From a position in the rear of the grove a battery was throwing shells over it. The flash of the guns startled the youth, at first. He thought they were aimed directly at him. Through the trees he watched the black figures of the gunners as they worked swiftly and intently. Their labor seemed a complicated thing. He wondered how they could remember its formula in the midst of confusion.

The guns squatted in a row like savage chiefs. They argued with abrupt violence. It was a grim pow-wow. Their busy servants ran hither and thither.

A small procession of wounded men were going drearily toward the rear. It was a flow of blood from the torn body of the brigade.

To the right and to the left were the dark lines of other troops. Far in front he thought he could see lighter masses protruding in points from the forest. They were suggestive of unnumbered thousands.

Once he saw a tiny battery go dashing along the line of the horizon. The tiny riders were beating the tiny horses.

From a sloping hill came the sound of cheerings and clashes. Smoke welled slowly through the leaves.

Batteries were speaking with thunderous oratorical effort. Here and there were flags, the red in the stripes dominating. They splashed bits of warm color upon the dark lines of troops.

The youth felt the old thrill at the sight of the emblem. They were like beautiful birds strangely undaunted in a storm.

As he listened to the din from the hillside, to a deep pulsating thunder that came from afar to the left, and to the lesser clamors which came from many directions, it occurred to him that they were fighting, too, over there, and over there, and over there. Heretofore he had supposed that all the battle was directly under his nose.

As he gazed around him the youth felt a flash of astonishment at the blue, pure sky and the sun gleamings on the trees and fields. It was surprising that Nature had gone tranquilly on with her golden process in the midst of so much devilment.

The youth awakened slowly. He came gradually back to a position from which he could regard himself. For moments he had been scrutinizing his person in a dazed way as if he had never before seen himself. Then he picked up his cap from the ground. He wriggled in his jacket to make a more comfortable fit, and, kneeling, relaced his shoe. He thoughtfully mopped his reeking features.

So it was all over at last! The supreme trial had been passed. The red, formidable difficulties of war had been vanquished.

He went into an ecstasy of self-satisfaction. He had the most delightful sensations of his life. Standing as if apart from himself, he viewed that last scene. He perceived that the man who had fought thus was magnificent.

He felt that he was a fine fellow. He saw himself even with those ideals which he had considered as far beyond him. He smiled in deep gratification.

Upon his fellows he beamed tenderness and good will. "Gee! ain't it hot, hey?" he said affably to a man who was polishing his streaming face with his coat sleeves.

"You bet!" said the other, grinning sociably. "I never seen sech dumb hotness." He sprawled out luxuriously on the ground. "Gee, yes! An' I hope we don't have no more fightin' till a week from Monday."

There were some handshakings and deep speeches with men whose features were familiar, but with whom the youth now felt the bonds of tied hearts. He helped a cursing comrade to bind up a wound of the shin.

But, of a sudden, cries of amazement broke out along the ranks of the new regiment. "Here they come ag'in! Here they come ag'in!" The man who had sprawled upon the ground started up and said, "Gosh!"

The youth turned quick eyes upon the fields. He discerned forms begin to swell in masses out of a distant wood. He again saw the tilted flag speeding forward.

The shells, which had ceased to trouble the regiment for a time, came swirling again, and exploded in the grass or among the leaves of the trees. They looked to be strange war flowers bursting into fierce bloom.

The men groaned. The luster faded from their eyes. Their smudged countenances now expressed a profound dejection. They moved their stiffened bodies slowly, and watched in sullen mood the frantic approach of the enemy. The slaves toiling in the temple of this god began to feel rebellion at his harsh tasks.

They fretted and complained each to each. "Oh, say, this is too much of a good thing! Why can't somebody send us supports?"

"We ain't never goin' to stand this second banging. I didn't come here to fight the hull derned rebel army."

There was one who raised a doleful cry. "I wish Bill Smithers had trod on my hand, insteader me treddin' on his'n." The sore joints of the regiment creaked as it painfully floundered into position to repulse.

The youth stared. Surely, he thought, this impossible thing was not about to happen. He waited as if he expected the enemy to suddenly stop, apologize, and retire bowing. It was all a mistake.

But the firing began somewhere on the regimental line and ripped along in both directions. The level sheets of flame developed great clouds of smoke that tumbled and tossed in the mild wind near the ground for a moment, and then rolled through the ranks as through a gate. The clouds were tinged an earthlike yellow in the sunrays and in the shadow were a sorry blue. The flag was sometimes eaten and lost in this mass of vapor, but more often it projected, sun-touched, resplendent.

Into the youth's eyes there came a look that one can see in the orbs of a jaded horse. His neck was quivering with nervous weakness, and the muscles of his arms felt numb and bloodless. His hands, too, seemed large and awkward as if he was wearing invisible mittens. And there was a great uncertainty about his knee joints.

The words that comrades had uttered previous to the firing began to recur to him. "Oh, say, this is too much of a good thing! What do they take us for—why don't they send supports? I didn't come here to fight the hull derned rebel army."

He began to exaggerate the endurance, the skill, and the valor of those who were coming. Himself reeling from exhaustion, he was astonished beyond measure at such persistency. They must be machines of steel. It was very gloomy struggling against such affairs, wound up perhaps to fight until sundown.

He slowly lifted his rifle, and catching a glimpse of the thickspread field he blazed at a cantering cluster. He stopped then and began to peer as best he could through the smoke. He caught changing views of the ground covered with men who were all running like pursued imps, and yelling.

To the youth it was an onslaught of redoubtable dragons. He became like the man who lost his legs at the approach of the red and green monster. He waited in a sort of a horrified, listening attitude. He seemed to shut his eyes and wait to be gobbled.

A man near him who up to this time had been working feverishly at his rifle suddenly stopped and ran with howls. A lad whose face had borne an expression of exalted courage, the majesty of him who dares give his life, was, at an instant, smitten abject. He blanched like one who has come to the edge of a cliff at midnight and is suddenly made aware. There was a revelation. He, too, threw down his gun and fled. There was no shame in his face. He ran like a rabbit.

Stephen Crane

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THE BRIDE COMES TO YELLOW SKY

I

The great Pullman was whirling onward with such dignity of motion that a glance from the window seemed simply to prove that the plains of Texas were pouring eastward. Vast flats of green grass, dull-hued spaces of mesquite and cactus, little groups of frame houses, woods of light and tender trees, all were sweeping into the east, sweeping over the horizon, a precipice.

A newly married pair had boarded this coach at San Antonio. The man's face was reddened from many days in the wind and sun, and a direct result of his new black clothes was that his brick-colored hands were constantly performing in a most conscious fashion. From time to time he looked down respectfully at his attire. He sat with a hand on each knee, like a man waiting in a barber's shop. The glances he devoted to other passengers were furtive and shy.

The bride was not pretty, nor was she very young. She wore a dress of blue cashmere, with small reservations of velvet here and there, and with steel buttons abounding. She continually twisted her head to regard her puff sleeves, very stiff, straight, and high. They embarrassed her. It was quite apparent that she had cooked, and that she expected to cook, dutifully. The blushes caused by the careless scrutiny of some passengers as she had entered the car were strange to see upon this plain, under-class countenance, which was drawn in placid, almost emotionless lines.

They were evidently very happy. "Ever been in a parlor-car before?" he asked, smiling with delight.

"No," she answered; "I never was. It's fine, ain't it?"

"Great! And then after a while we'll go forward to the diner, and get a big lay-out. Finest meal in the world. Charge a dollar."

"Oh, do they?" cried the bride. "Charge a dollar? Why, that's too much—for—us—ain't it, Jack?"

"Not this trip, anyhow," he answered bravely. "We're going to go the whole thing."

Later he explained to her about the trains. "You see, it's a thousand miles from one end of Texas to the other; and this train runs right across it, and never stops but four times." He had the pride of an owner. He pointed out to her the dazzling fittings of the coach; and in truth her eyes opened wider as she contemplated the sea-green figured velvet, the shining brass, silver, and glass, the wood that gleamed as darkly brilliant as the surface of a pool of oil. At one end a bronze figure sturdily held a support for a separated chamber, and at convenient places on the ceiling were frescos in olive and silver.

To the minds of the pair, their surroundings reflected the glory of their marriage that morning in San Antonio; this was the environment of their new estate; and the man's face in particular beamed with an elation that made him appear ridiculous to the negro porter. This individual at times surveyed them from afar with an amused and superior grin. On other occasions he bullied them with skill in ways that did not make it exactly plain to them that they were being bullied. He subtly used all the manners of the most accomplished kind of snobbery. He oppressed them; but of this oppression they had small knowledge, and they speedily forgot that infrequently a number of travelers covered them with stares of derisive enjoyment. Historically there was supposed to be something humorous in their situation.

"We are due in Yellow Sky at 3:42," he said, looking tenderly into her eyes.

"Oh, are we?" she said, as if she had not been aware of it. To evince surprise at her husband's statement was part of her wifely amiability. She took from a pocket a little silver watch; and as she held it before her, and stared at it with a frown of attention, the new husband's face shone.

"I bought it in San Anton' from a friend of mine," he told her gleefully.

"It's seventeen minutes past twelve," she said, looking up at him with a kind of shy and clumsy coquetry. A passenger, noting this play, grew excessively sardonic, and winked at himself in one of the numerous mirrors.

At last they went to the dining-car. Two rows of negro waiters, in glowing white suits, surveyed their entrance with the interest, and also the equanimity, of men who had been forewarned. The pair fell to the lot of a waiter who happened to feel pleasure in steering them through their meal. He viewed them with the manner of a fatherly pilot, his countenance radiant with benevolence. The patronage, entwined with the ordinary deference, was not plain to them. And yet, as they returned to their coach, they showed in their faces a sense of escape.

To the left, miles down a long purple slope, was a little ribbon of mist where moved the keening Rio Grande. The train was approaching it at an angle, and the apex was Yellow Sky. Presently it was apparent that, as the distance from Yellow Sky grew shorter, the husband became commensurately restless. His brick-red hands were more insistent in their prominence. Occasionally he was even rather absent-minded and far-away when the bride leaned forward and addressed him.

As a matter of truth, Jack Potter was beginning to find the shadow of a deed weigh upon him like a leaden slab. He, the town marshal of Yellow Sky, a man known, liked, and feared in his corner, a prominent person, had gone to San Antonio to meet a girl he believed he loved, and there, after the usual prayers, had actually induced her to marry him, without consulting Yellow Sky for any part of the transaction. He was now bringing his bride before an innocent and unsuspecting community.

Of course people in Yellow Sky married as it pleased them, in accordance with a general custom; but such was Potter's thought of his duty to his friends, or of their idea of his duty, or of an unspoken form which does not control men in these matters, that he felt he was heinous. He had committed an extraordinary crime. Face to face with this girl in San Antonio and spurred by his sharp impulse, he had gone headlong over all the social hedges. At San Antonio he was like a man hidden in the dark. A knife to sever any friendly duty, any form, was easy to his hand in that remote city. But the hour of Yellow Sky—the hour of daylight—was approaching.

He knew full well that his marriage was an important thing to his town. It could only be exceeded by the burning of the new hotel. His friends could not forgive him.

Frequently he had reflected on the advisability of telling them by telegraph, but a new cowardice had been upon him. He feared to do it. And now the train was hurrying him toward a scene of amazement, glee, and reproach. He glanced out of the window at the line of haze swinging slowly in toward the train.

Yellow Sky had a kind of brass band, which played painfully, to the delight of the populace. He laughed without heart as he thought of it. If the citizens could dream of his prospective arrival with his bride, they would parade the band at the station and escort them, amid cheers and laughing congratulations, to his adobe home.

He resolved that he would use all the devices of speed and plainscraft in making the journey from the station to his house. Once within that safe citadel, he could issue some sort of a vocal bulletin, and then not go among the citizens until they had time to wear off a little of their enthusiasm.

The bride looked anxiously at him.

"What's worrying you, Jack!"

He laughed again. "I'm not worrying, girl; I'm only thinking of Yellow Sky."

She flushed in comprehension.

A sense of mutual guilt invaded their minds and developed a finer tenderness. They looked at each other with eyes softly aglow. But Potter often laughed the same nervous laugh; the flush upon the bride's face seemed quite permanent.

The traitor to the feelings of Yellow Sky narrowly watched the speeding landscape. "We're nearly there," he said.

Presently the porter came and announced the proximity of Potter's home. He held a brush in his hand, and, with all his airy superiority gone, he brushed Potter's new clothes as the latter slowly turned this way and that way. Potter fumbled out a coin and gave it to the porter, as he had seen others do. It was a heavy muscle-bound business, as that of a man shoeing his first horse.

The porter took their bag, and as the train began to slow they moved forward to the hooded platform of the car. Presently the two engines and their long string of coaches rushed into the station of Yellow Sky.

"They have to take water here," said Potter, from a constricted throat and in mournful cadence, as one announcing death. Before the train stopped his eye had swept the length of the platform, and he was glad and astonished to see there was none upon it but the station agent, who, with a slightly hurried and anxious air, was walking toward the water-tanks. When the train had halted, the porter alighted first, and placed in position a little temporary step.

"Come on, girl," said Potter, hoarsely. As he helped her down they each laughed on a false note. He took the bag from the negro, and bade his wife cling to his arm. As they slunk rapidly away, his hang-dog glance perceived that they were unloading the two trunks, and also that the station-agent, far ahead near the baggage-car, had turned and was running toward him, making gestures. He laughed and groaned as he laughed, when he noted the first effect of his marital bliss upon Yellow Sky. He gripped his wife's arm firmly to his side, and they fled. Behind them the porter stood, chuckling fatuously.

II

The California express on the Southern Railway was due at Yellow Sky in twenty-one minutes. There were six men at the bar of the Weary Gentleman Saloon. One was a drummer, who talked a great deal and rapidly; three were Texans, who did not care to talk at that time; and two were Mexican sheep-herders, who did not talk as a general practice in the Weary Gentleman Saloon. The barkeeper's dog lay on the board walk that crossed in front of the door. His head was on his paws, and he glanced drowsily here and there with the constant vigilance of a dog that is kicked on occasion. Across the sandy street were some vivid green grassplots, so wonderful in appearance, amid the sands that burned near them in a blazing sun, that they caused a doubt in the mind. They exactly resembled the grass mats used to represent lawns on the stage. At the cooler end of the railway station, a man without a coat sat in a tilted chair and smoked his pipe. The fresh-cut bank of the Rio Grande circled near the town, and there could be seen beyond it a great plum-colored plain of mesquite.

Save for the busy drummer and his companions in the saloon, Yellow Sky was dozing. The newcomer leaned gracefully upon the bar, and recited many tales with the confidence of a bard who has come upon a new field.

"—and at the moment that the old man fell downstairs with the bureau in his arms, the old woman was coming up with two scuttles of coal, and of course—"

The drummer's tale was interrupted by a young man who suddenly appeared in the open door. He cried: "Scratchy Wilson's drunk, and has turned loose with both hands." The two Mexicans at once set down their glasses and faded out of the rear entrance of the saloon.

The drummer, innocent and jocular, answered: "All right, old man. S'pose he has? Come in and have a drink, anyhow."

But the information had made such an obvious cleft in every skull in the room that the drummer was obliged to see its importance. All had become instantly solemn. "Say," said he, mystified, "what is this?" His three companions made the introductory gesture of eloquent speech; but the young man at the door forestalled them.

"It means, my friend," he answered, as he came into the saloon, "that for the next two hours this town won't be a health resort."

The barkeeper went to the door, and locked and barred it; reaching out of the window, he pulled in heavy wooden shutters, and barred them. Immediately a solemn, chapel-like gloom was upon the place. The drummer was looking from one to another.

"But say," he cried, "what is this, anyhow! You don't mean there is going to be a gun-fight?"

"Don't know whether there'll be a fight or not," answered one man, grimly; "but there'll be some shootin'—some good shootin'."

The young man who had warned them waved his hand. "Oh, there'll be a fight fast enough, if any one wants it. Anybody can get a fight out there in the street. There's a fight just waiting."

The drummer seemed to be swayed between the interest of a foreigner and a perception of personal danger.

"What did you say his name was?" he asked.

"Scratchy Wilson," they answered in chorus.

"And will he kill anybody? What are you going to do? Does this happen often? Does he rampage around like this once a week or so? Can he break in that door?"

"No; he can't break down that door," replied the barkeeper. "He's tried it three times. But when he comes you'd better lay down on the floor, stranger. He's dead sure to shoot at it, and a bullet may come through."

Thereafter the drummer kept a strict eye upon the door. The time had not yet been called for him to hug the floor, but, as a minor precaution, he sidled near to the wall. "Will he kill anybody?" he said again.

The men laughed low and scornfully at the question.

"He's out to shoot, and he's out for trouble. Don't see any good in experimentin' with him."

"But what do you do in a case like this? What do you do?"

A man responded: "Why, he and Jack Potter—"

"But," in chorus the other men interrupted, "Jack Potter's in San Anton'."

"Well, who is he? What's he got to do with it?"

"Oh, he's the town marshall. He goes out and fights Scratchy when he gets on one of these tears."

"Wow!" said the drummer, mopping his brow. "Nice job he's got."

The voices had toned away to mere whisperings. The drummer wished to ask further questions, which were born of an increasing anxiety and bewilderment; but when he attempted them, the men merely looked at him in irritation and motioned him to remain silent. A tense waiting hush was upon them. In the deep shadows of the room their eyes shone as they listened for sounds from the street. One man made three gestures at the barkeeper; and the latter, moving like a ghost, handed him a glass and a bottle. The man poured a full glass of whisky, and set down the bottle noiselessly. He gulped the whisky in a swallow, and turned again toward the door in immovable silence. The drummer saw that the barkeeper, without a sound, had taken a Winchester from beneath the bar. Later he saw this individual beckoning to him, so he tiptoed across the room.

"You better come with me back of the bar."

"No, thanks," said the drummer, perspiring; "I'd rather be where I can make a break for the back door."

Whereupon the man of bottles made a kindly but peremptory gesture. The drummer obeyed it, and finding himself seated on a box with his head below the level of the bar, balm was laid upon his soul at sight of various zinc and copper fittings that bore a resemblance to armor-plate. The barkeeper took a seat comfortably upon an adjacent box.

"You see," he whispered, "this here Scratchy Wilson is a wonder with a gun—a perfect wonder; and when he goes on the war-trail, we hunt out holes—naturally. He's about the last one of the old gang that used to hang out along the river here. He's a terror when he's drunk. When he's sober he's all right—kind of simple—wouldn't hurt a fly—nicest fellow in town. But when he's drunk—whoo!"

There were periods of stillness. "I wish Jack Potter was back from San Anton'," said the barkeeper. "He shot

Wilson up once—in the leg—and he would sail in and pull out the kinks in this thing."

Presently they heard from a distance the sound of a shot, followed by three wild yowls. It instantly removed a bond from the men in the darkened saloon. There was a shuffling of feet. They looked at each other. "Here he comes," they said.

III

A man in a maroon-colored flannel shirt, which had been purchased for purposes of decoration, and made principally by some Jewish women on the East Side of New York, rounded a corner and walked into the middle of the main street of Yellow Sky. In either hand the man held a long, heavy, blue-black revolver. Often he yelled, and these cries rang through a semblance of a deserted village, shrilly flying over the roofs in a volume that seemed to have no relation to the ordinary vocal strength of a man. It was as if the surrounding stillness formed the arch of a tomb over him. These cries of ferocious challenge rang against walls of silence. And his boots had red tops with gilded imprints, of the kind beloved in winter by little sledding boys on the hillsides of New England.

The man's face flamed in a rage begot of whisky. His eyes, rolling, and yet keen for ambush, hunted the still doorways and windows. He walked with the creeping movement of the midnight cat. As it occurred to him, he roared menacing information. The long revolvers in his hands were as easy as straws; they were moved with an electric swiftness. The little fingers of each hand played sometimes in a musician's way. Plain from the low collar of the shirt, the cords of his neck straightened and sank, straightened and sank, as passion moved him. The only sounds were his terrible invitations. The calm adobes preserved their demeanor at the passing of this small thing in the middle of the street.

There was no offer to fight—no offer of fight. The man called to the sky. There were no attractions. He bellowed and fumed and swayed his revolvers here and everywhere.

The dog of the barkeeper of the Weary Gentleman Saloon had not appreciated the advance of events. He yet lay dozing in front of his master's door. At sight of the dog, the man paused and raised his revolver humorously. At sight of the man, the dog sprang up and walked diagonally away, with a sullen head, and growling. The man yelled, and the dog broke into a gallop. As it was about to enter an alley, there was a loud noise, a whistling, and something spat the ground directly before it. The dog screamed and, wheeling in terror, galloped headlong in a new direction. Again there was a noise, a whistling, and sand was kicked viciously before it. Fear-stricken, the dog turned and flurried like an animal in a pen. The man stood laughing, his weapons at his hips.

Ultimately the man was attracted by the closed door of the Weary Gentleman Saloon. He went to it and, hammering with a revolver, demanded drink.

The door remaining imperturbable, he picked a bit of paper from the walk, and nailed it to the framework with a knife. He then turned his back contemptuously upon this popular resort, and walking to the opposite side of the street and spinning there on his heel quickly and lithely, fired at the bit of paper. He missed it by a half-inch. He swore at himself, and went away. Later he comfortably fusilladed the windows of his intimate friend. The man was playing with this town; it was a toy for him.

But still there was no offer to fight. The name of Jack Potter, his ancient antagonist, entered his mind, and he concluded that it would be a glad thing if he should go to Potter's house, and by bombardment induce him to come out and fight. He moved in the direction of his desire, chanting Apache scalp-music.

When he arrived at it, Potter's house presented the same still front as had the other adobes. Taking up a strategic position, the man howled a challenge. But this house regarded him as might a great stone god. It gave no sign. After a decent wait, the man howled further challenges, mingling with them wonderful epithets.

Presently there came the spectacle of a man churning himself into deepest rage over the immobility of a house. He fumed at it as the winter wind attacks a prairie cabin in the North. To the distance there should have gone the sound of a tumult like the fighting of two hundred Mexicans. As necessity bade him, he paused for breath or to reload his revolvers.

IV

Potter and his bride walked sheepishly and with speed. Sometimes they laughed together shamefacedly and low.

"Next corner, dear," he said finally.

They put forth the efforts of a pair walking bowed against a strong wind. Potter was about to raise a finger to point the first appearance of the new home when, as they circled the corner, they came face to face with a man in a maroon-colored shirt, who was feverishly pushing cartridges into a large revolver. Upon the instant the man dropped his revolver to the ground, and, like lightning, whipped another from its holster. The second weapon was aimed at the bridegroom's chest.

There was a silence. Potter's mouth seemed to be merely a grave for his tongue. He exhibited an instinct to at once loosen his arm from the woman's grip, and he dropped the bag to the sand. As for the bride, her face had gone as yellow as old cloth. She was a slave to hideous rites, gazing at the apparitional snake.

The two men faced each other at a distance of three paces. He of the revolver smiled with a new and quiet ferocity.

"Tried to sneak up on me," he said. "Tried to sneak up on me!" His eyes grew more baleful. As Potter made a slight movement, the man thrust his revolver venomously forward. "No; don't you do it, Jack Potter. Don't you move a finger toward a gun just yet. Don't you move an eyelash. The time has come for me to settle with you, and I'm goin' to do it my own way, and loaf along with no interferin'. So if you don't want a gun bent on you, just mind what I tell you."

Potter looked at his enemy. "I ain't got a gun on me, Scratchy," he said. "Honest, I ain't." He was stiffening and steadying, but yet somewhere at the back of his mind a vision of the Pullman floated: the sea-green figured velvet, the shining brass, silver, and glass, the wood that gleamed as darkly brilliant as the surface of a pool of oil—all the glory of the marriage, the environment of the new estate. "You know I fight when it comes to fighting, Scratchy Wilson; but I ain't got a gun on me. You'll have to do all the shootin' yourself."

His enemy's face went livid. He stepped forward and lashed his weapon to and fro before Potter's chest. "Don't you tell me you ain't got no gun on you, you whelp. Don't tell me no lie like that. There ain't a man in Texas ever seen you without a gun. Don't take me for no kid." His eyes blazed with light, and his throat worked like a pump.

"I ain't takin' you for no kid," answered Potter. His heels had not moved an inch backward. "I'm takin' you for a—fool. I tell you I ain't got a gun, and I ain't. If you're goin' to shoot me up, you better begin now; you'll never get a chance like this again."

So much enforced reasoning had told on Wilson's rage; he was calmer. "If you ain't got a gun, why ain't you got a gun?" he sneered. "Been to Sunday-school?"

"I ain't got a gun because I've just come from San Anton' with my wife. I'm married," said Potter. "And if I'd thought there was going to be any galoots like you prowling around when I brought my wife home, I'd had a gun, and don't you forget it."

"Married!" said Scratchy, not at all comprehending.

"Yes, married. I'm married," said Potter, distinctly.

"Married?" said Scratchy. Seemingly for the first time, he saw the drooping, drowning woman at the other man's side. "No!" he said. He was like a creature allowed a glimpse of another world. He moved a pace backward, and his arm, with the revolver, dropped to his side. "Is this the lady?" he asked.

"Yes; this is the lady," answered Potter.

There was another period of silence.

"Well," said Wilson at last, slowly, "I s'pose it's all off now."

"It's all off if you say so, Scratchy. You know I didn't make the trouble." Potter lifted his valise.

"Well, I 'low it's off, Jack," said Wilson. He was looking at the ground. "Married!" He was not a student of chivalry; it was merely that in the presence of this foreign condition he was a simple child of the earlier plains. He picked up his starboard revolver, and placing both weapons in their holsters, he went away. His feet made funnel-shaped tracks in the heavy sand.

Stephen Crane

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Hamlin Garland (1860—)

THE LEASER

The only passenger in the car who really interested me was a burly young fellow who sat just ahead of me, and who seemed to be something more than a tourist, for the conductor greeted him pleasantly and the brakeman shook his hand. We were climbing to Cripple Creek by way of the Short Line, but as "the sceneries" were all familiar to me, I was able to study my fellow-passengers.

The man before me was very attractive, although he was by no interpretation a gentle type. On the contrary, he looked to be the rough and ready American, rough in phrase and ready to fight. His corduroy coat hunched about his muscular shoulders in awkward lines, and his broad face, inclining to fat, was stern and harsh. He appeared to be about thirty-five years of age.

The more I studied him the more I hankered to know his history. The conductor, coming through, hailed him with:

"Well, gettin' back, eh? Had a good trip?"

Once or twice the miner—he was evidently a miner—leaned from the window and waved his hat to someone on the crossing, shouted a cheery, "How goes it?" and the brakeman asked:

"How did you find the East?"

From all this I deduced that the miner had been away on a visit to New York, or Boston, or Washington.

As we rose the air became so cool, so clear, so crisp, that we seemed to be entering a land of eternal dew and roses, and as our car filled with the delicious scent of pine branches and green grasses, the miner, with a solemn look on his face, took off his hat and, turning to me, said, with deep intonation:

"This is what I call *air*. This is good for what ails me."

"You've been away," I stated rather than asked.

"I've been back East—back to see the old folks—first time in eleven years."

"What do you call East?" I pursued.

"Anything back of the Missouri River," he replied, smiling a little. "In this case it was Michigan—near Jackson."

"Citizen of the camp?" I nodded up the cañon.

"Yes, I'm workin' a lease on Bull Hill."

"How's the old camp looking?"

"All shot to pieces. Half the houses empty, and business gone to pot. It's a purty yellow proposition now."

"You don't say! It was pretty slow when I was there last, but I didn't suppose it had gone broke. What's the matter of it?"

"Too many monopolists. All the good properties have gone into one or two hands. Then these labor wars have scared operators away. However, I'm not complainin'. I've made good on this lease of mine." He grinned boyishly. "I've been back to flash my roll in the old man's face. You see, I left the farm rather sudden one Sunday morning eleven years ago, and I'd never been back." His face changed to a graver, sweeter expression. "My sister wrote that Mother was not very well and kind o' grievin' about me, so, as I was making good money, I thought I could afford to surprise the old man by slapping him on the back. You see, when I left, I told him I'd never darken his door again—you know the line of talk a boy hands out to his dad when he's mad—and for over ten years I never so much as wrote a line to any of the family."

As he mused darkly over this period, I insinuated another question. "What was the trouble?"

"That's just it! Nothing to warrant anything more than a cuss-word, and yet it cut me loose. I was goin' around now and then with a girl the old man didn't like—or rather, my old man and her old man didn't hitch—and, besides, her old man was a kind of shiftless cuss, one o' these men that raised sparrows in his beard, and so one Sunday morning, as I was polishin' up the buggy to go after Nance, who but Dad should come out and growl:

" 'Where ye goin' with that buggy?'

" 'None o' your dam' business,' I snaps back, hot as hell in a secunt, 'but just to touch you up, I'll tell you, I'm goin' over to see Nance McRae.'

"Well, sir, that set him off. 'Not with my horses,' says he, and, grabbin' the buggy by the thills, he sent it back into the shed. Then he turned on me:

" 'If you want to see that girl, you walk! I won't have you usin' my tired animals to cart such trash—'

"I stopped him right there. He was a big, raw-boned citizen, but I was a husky chunk of a lad myself and ready to fight.

" 'Don't you speak a word against Nance,' I says, 'for if you do I'll waller ye right here and now; and as for your horse and buggy, you may keep 'em till the cows come home. Here's where I get off. You'll never see me again.'

"Gee! I was hot! I went in, packed up my grip, and hit the first train for the West."

"Just as thousands of other angry boys have done," I said, realizing to the minutest detail this scene. "They never think of going East."

"No, the West is the only place for a man in trouble—at least, so it seems to me."

"Where did you go? What did you do?"

He mused again as if recalling his struggles. "I dropped off in Kansas and got a job on a farm and fussed around there for the fall and winter. Then I got the minin' fever and came to Victor. Of course, there wasn't anything for a grass-cutter like me to do in the hills but swing a pick. I didn't like underground work, and so I went on a ranch again. Well, I kept tryin' the minin' game off and on, prospectin' here and there, and finally I got into this leasin' business, and two years ago I secured a lease on the 'Red

Cent' and struck it good and plenty. Oh, I don't intend to say it's any Portland—but it pays me and I've been stackin' up some few dollars down at the Commercial Bank, and feelin' easy."

The man's essential sturdiness of character came out as he talked, and his face lost the heavy and rather savage look it had worn at first. I had taken a seat beside him by this time, and my sincere interest in his affairs seemed to please him. He was eager to talk, as one who had been silent for a long time.

I led him back to the point of most interest to me. "And so at last you relented and went home? I hope you found the old folks both alive? Did they know where you were?"

"Yes. My sister saw my name in a paper—when I made my stake—and wrote, and Mother used to send word—used to mention Dad occasionally." He laughed silently. "It sure is great fun, this goin' back to the home pasture with a fat wad in your pants pocket—Lord! I owned the whole town."

"Tell me about it!" I pleaded.

He was ready to comply. "Our house stood near the railway, about four miles this side of Jackson, and you bet I had my head out of the winder to see if it was all there. It was. It looked just the same, only the old man had painted it yellow—and seemed like I could see Mother settin' on the porch. I'd had it all planned to hire the best automobile in town and go up there in shape to heal sore eyes—but changed my plan.

" 'I'll give 'em more of a shock if I walk out and pretend to be poor and kind o' meek,' I says to myself.

"So I cached my valise at the station, and I wallered out there through the dust—it was June and a dry spell and hot. Judas priest! I thought I'd sweat my wad into pulp before I got there—me just down from the high country! On the way I got to wonderin' about Nancy. 'Is she alive, I wonder?' "

"Do you mean to say you left *her* without a word of good-by?"

He looked down at his knee and scratched a patch of grease there. "That's what! I was so blame mad I cut loose of the whole outfit. Once or twice Sis had mentioned Nance in a casual kind of way, but as I didn't bite—she had quit fishin', and so I was all in the dark about her. She might 'ave been dead or married or crazy, for all I knew. However, now that I was on my way back with nineteen thousand dollars in the bank and a good show for more, I kind o' got to wonderin' what was she sufferin' at."

"I hope she was married to a banker in town and the owner of an electric brougham. 'Twould have served you right."

He smiled again and resumed his story. "By the time I reached the old gate I was dusty as a stagecoach, and this old corduroy suit made me look as much like a tramp as anybody. As I came onto the old man he was waterin' a span o' horses at the well. Everything looked about the same, only a little older—he was pretty gray and some thinner—and I calls out kind o' meek-like:

" 'Can I get a job here, Mister?'

"He looked me over a spell, then says, 'No, for I'm purty well supplied with hands.'

" 'What you need is a boss,' I says, grinnin'.

"Then he knew me, but he didn't do no fancy start—he just growled out kind o' surly:

" 'I'm competent to do all the bossin' on this place,' he says.

" 'You may think so,' I joshed him, 'but if I couldn't keep a place lookin' a little slicker 'n this, I'd sell out and give some better man a chance.'

"Did that faze him? Not on your life. He checked up both horses before he opened his mouth again.

" 'You don't look none too slick yourself. How comes it you're trampin' this hot weather?'

"I see what he was driving at, and so I fed him the dope he wanted.

" 'Well, I've had hard luck,' I says. 'I've been sick.'

" 'You don't look sick,' he snapped out, quick as a flash. 'You look tolerable husky. You 'pear like one o' these chaps that eat up all they earn—eat and drink and gamble,' he went on, pilin' it up. 'I don't pity tramps a bit; they're all topers.'

"I took it meek as Moses.

" 'Well,' I says, 'I'm just out of the hospital, and whilst I may seem husky, I need a good quiet place and a nice easy job for a while. Moreover, I'm terrible hungry.'

" 'You go 'long up to the house,' he says, 'and tell the girl in the kitchen to hand you out a plate of cold meat. I'll be along in a minute.'

"And off he went to the barn, leavin' me shakin' with his jolt. He was game all right! He figured me out as the prodigal son, and wa'n't goin' to knuckle. He intended for me to do all the knee exercise. I drifted along up the path toward the kitchen.

"Judas! but it did seem nice and familiar. It was all so green and flowery after camp. There ain't a tree or a patch of green grass left in Cripple; but there, in our old yard, were lylock-trees, and rose-bushes climbin' the porch, and pinks and hollyhocks—and beehives, just as they used to set—and clover. Say, it nearly had me snifflin'. It sure did."

The memory of it rather pinched his voice as he described it, but he went on.

"Of course I couldn't live down there now—it's too low, after a man has breathed such air as this."

He looked out at the big clouds soaring round Pike's Peak.

"But the flowers and the grass they did kind o' get me. I edged round on the front side of the house, and, sure enough, there sat Mother, just as she used to—in the same old chair.

"Cap, I want to tell you, I didn't play no circus tricks on *her*. Her head had grown white as snow and she looked kind o' sad and feeble. I began to understand a little of the worry I'd been to her. I said good evening, and she turned and looked at me. Then she opened her arms and called out my name."

His voice choked unmistakably this time, and it was a minute or two before he resumed.

"No jokes, no lies doin' there! I opened right up to her. I told her I'd done well, but that I didn't want Father to know it just yet, and we sit there holdin' hands when the old man hove around the corner.

" 'Stephen,' says Mother, kind o' solemn, 'here's our son Edward.'

"Did the old man wilt, or climb the line fence and offer to shake hands? Nitsky! He just shoved one hip onto the edge of the porch and remarked:

" 'Does this dry spell reach as fur as where you've been?' "

He broke into silent laughter again, and I joined him. This was all so deeply characteristic of the life I had known in my youth that I writhed with delight. I understood the duel of wits and wills. I could see it proceed as my companion chuckled.

"Well, sir, we played that game all evening. I told of all the bad leases I'd tackled—and how I'd been thrown from a horse and laid up for six months. I brought out every set-back and bruise I'd ever had—all to see if the old man would weaken and feel sorry for me."

"Did he?"

"Not for a minute! And sometimes, as I looked at him, I was sorry I'd come home; but when I was with Mother I was glad. She 'phoned to Sis, who lived in Jackson, and Sis came on the lope, and we had a nice family party. Sis touched on Nancy McRae.

" 'You remember her?' she asked.

" ' I seem to,' I says, kind of slow, as if I was dredgin' my mind to find something.

" 'Well, she's on the farm, just the same as ever—takin' care of the old man. Her mother's dead.'

"I didn't push that matter any farther, but just planned to ride over the next morning and see how she looked.

"All that evening Sis and I deviled the old man. Mother had told Sis about my mine—and so she'd bring out every little while how uncertain the gold-seekin' business was and how if I'd stayed on the farm I could 'a' been well off—and she'd push me hard when I started in on one of my hard-luck stories. I had to own up that I had walked out to save money, and that I was travelin' on an excursion ticket 'cause it was cheap—and so on.

"The old man's mouth got straighter and straighter and his eyes colder—but I told Mother not to say anything till next day, and she didn't, although he tossed and turned and grunted half the night. He really took it hard; but he finally agreed to harbor me and give me a chance—so Mother told me next morning—which was Sunday. I had planned to get home Saturday night.

"Next morning after breakfast—and it *was* a breakfast—I strolled out to the barn and, the carriage-shed door being open, I pulled the old buggy out—'peared like it was the very same one, and I was a-dustin' the cushions and fussin' around when the old man came up.

" 'What you doin' with that buggy?' he asks.

" 'I jest thought I'd ride over and see Nance McRae,' I says, just as I did eleven years before.

" 'I reckon you better think again,' he says, and rolls the buggy back into the shed, just the way he did before. 'If you want to see Nance McRae you can walk,' he says, and I could see he meant it.

" 'All right,' I says, and out I stepped without so much as saying good-by, intendin' to go for good this time.

"I went across the road to Martin's and got a chance to 'phone into Jackson, and in about twenty minutes I was whirlin' over the road in a red-cushioned automobile that ran smooth as oil, and inside of half an hour I was rollin' through McRae's gate.

"Now, up to this time, I hadn't any notion of a program as to Nancy; I was all took up with gettin' ahead of Dad. But when I found myself in front of old McRae, more down at the heel and raggeder in the seat than ever, I was a whole lot set back. What was I to say to him and to her? I didn't know. He was gappin' at me with the eyes of an owl, and so I opened up.

" 'I see you have no lightnin'-rods?' I says. 'In this day and age of the world you can't afford to go without lightnin'-rods.'

"He wa'n't no fool, if he did wear rats in his hair, and he says:

" 'I thought you was a cream-separator man. Are lightnin'-rods comin' into style again?'

" 'My kind is,' I says.

" 'Well, the trade must be lookin' up,' he says, walkin' round and round my machine and eyein' it. 'I'm thinkin' of havin' one of them wagons for haulin' milk to town. Won't you light out?'

" 'Don't care if I do,' I says, and out I rolled, feelin' a little shaky.

"I was mighty anxious to see Nance by this time, but felt shy of askin' about her.

" 'What *is* the latest kink in rods?' asked the old cuss.

" 'These kind I sell,' I says, 'are the kind that catch and store the electricity in a tank down cellar. Durin' a thunderstorm you can save up enough to rock the baby and run the churn for a week or two.'

" 'I want 'o know,' he says. 'Well, we hain't got a baby and no churn—but mebbe it would run a cream-separator?'

" 'Sure it would.'

"All the time we was a-joshin' this way he was a-studyin' me—and finally he said:

" 'You can't fool me, Ed. How are ye?'

"And we shook hands. I always liked the old cuss. He was a great reader—always talkin' about Napoleon—he'd been a great man if he'd ever got off the farm and into something that required just his kind o' brain-work.

" 'Come in,' he says. 'Nance will want to see you.'

"The minute he said that I had a queer feelin' at the pit o' my stummick—I did, sure thing. 'It's a little early for a call,' I says, 'and I ain't in Sunday clothes.'

" 'That don't matter,' he says; ' she'll be glad to see you any time.'

"You'd 'a' thought I'd been gone eleven weeks instead of eleven years.

"Nance wasn't a bit like her dad. She always looked shipshape, no matter what she was a-doin'. She was in the kitchen, busy as a gasoline-motor, when we busted through the door.

" 'Nance!' the old man called out, 'here's Ed Hatch.'

"She didn't do any fancy stunts. She just straightened up and looked at me kind o' steady for a minute, and then came over to shake hands.

" 'I'm glad to see you back, Ed,' she says."

The stress of this meeting was still over him, as I could see and hear, and I waited for him to go on.

"She hadn't changed as much as Mother. She was older and sadder and kind o' subdued, and her hand felt calloused, but I'd 'a' known her anywhere. She was dressed in a blue calico dress, but she was sure handsome still, and I said to her:

" 'You need a change of climate,' I says, 'and a different kind of boss. Colorado's where you ought to be,' I went on.

"For half an hour I kept banterin' her like that, and though she got pink now and then, she didn't seem to understand—or if she did she didn't let on. She stuck to her work whilst the old man and me watched her. Seein' her going about that kitchen that way got me locoed. I always liked to watch Mother in the kitchen—and Nance was a genuine housekeeper, I always knew that.

"Finally I says:

" 'I hain't got any buggy, Nance—the old man wouldn't let me have one last Sunday—I mean eleven years ago—that's what threw me off the track—but I've got a forty-horse-power car out here. Suppose you put on your best apron and take a ride with me.'

"She made some words as women will, but she got ready, and she did look handsomer than ever as she came out. She was excited, I could see that, but she was all there! No jugglin' or fussin'.

" 'Climb in the front seat, Dad,' I says. 'It's me and Nance to the private box. Turn on the juice,' I says to the driver.

"Well, sir, we burned up all the grease in the box lookin' up the old neighbors and the places we used to visit with horse and buggy—and every time I spoke to the old man I called him 'Dad'—and finally we fetched up at the biggest hotel in the town and had dinner together.

"Then I says: 'Dad, you better lay down and snooze. Nance and me are goin' out for a walk.'

"The town had swelled up some, but one or two of the old stores was there, and as we walked past the windows I says: 'Remember the time we stood here and wished we could buy things?'

"She kind o' laughed. 'I don't believe I do.'

" 'Yes, you do,' I says. 'Well, we can look now to some account, for I've got nineteen thousand dollars in the bank and a payin' lease on a mine.' "

Up to this minute he had been fairly free to express his real feelings—hypnotized by my absorbed gaze—but now, like most Anglo-Saxons, he began to shy. He began to tell of a fourteen-dollar suit of clothes (bought at this store) which turned green in the hot sun.

"Oh, come now!" I insisted, "I want to know about Nancy. All this interests me deeply. Did she agree to come back with you?"

He looked a little bit embarrassed. "I asked her to—right there in front of that window. I said, 'I want you to let me buy you that white dress.'

" 'Judas priest! I can't let you do that,' she says.

" 'Why not?' I said. 'We're goin' to be married, anyhow.'

" 'Is that so?' she asked. 'I hadn't heard of it.'

"Oh, she was no babe, I tell you. We went back to the hotel and woke up the old man, and I ordered up the best machine in the shop—a big seven-seated, shiny one, half as long as a Pullman parlor-car, with a top and brass housin's and extra tires strapped on, and a place for a trunk—an outfit that made me look like a street-railway magnate. It set me back a whole lot, but I wanted to stagger Dad—and I did. As we rolled up to the door he came out with eyes you could hang your hat on.

" 'What's all this?' he asked.

"I hopped out.

" 'Miss McRae,' I says, 'this is my father. Dad, this is Mister McRae. I think you've met before.' "

He chuckled again, that silent interior laugh, and I was certainly grinning in sympathy as he went on.

" 'Just help me with this trunk,' I says. 'The horses bein' tired, I just thought I'd have a dray to bring up my duds.'

"Well, sir, I had him flat down. He couldn't raise a grunt. He stood like a post while I laid off my trunk; but Mother and Sis came out and were both very nice to Nance. Mother asked her to get out, and she did, and I took 'em all for a ride later—all but Dad. Couldn't get him inside the machine. Nance stayed for supper, and just as we were goin' in Dad said to me:

" 'How much does that red machine cost you an hour?'

" 'About two dollars.'

" 'I reckon you better send it back to the shop,' he says. 'You can take Nance home in my buggy.'

"It was his surrender; but I didn't turn a hair.

" 'I guess you're right,' I says. 'It is a little expensive to spark in—and a little too public, too.' "

The whistle of the engine announcing the station helped him out.

"Here's Victor, and my mine is up there on the northwest side. You can just see the chimney. I've got another year on it, and I'm goin' to raise dirt to beat hell durin' all the time there is left, and then I'm goin' to Denver."

"And Nance?"

"Oh, she's comin' out next week," he said, as he rose to take down his valise. "I've bought a place at the Springs."

"Good luck to you both," said I, as he swung from the train.

Hamlin Garland

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James Branch Cabell (1879—)

PORCELAIN CUPS

I. Of Greatness Intimately Viewed

"Ah, but they are beyond praise," said Cynthia Allonby, enraptured, "and certainly you should have presented them to the Queen."

"Her Majesty already possesses a cup of that ware," replied Lord Pevensey. "It was one of her New Year's gifts, from Robert Cecil. Hers is, I believe, not quite so fine as either of yours; but then, they tell me, there is not the like of this pair in England, nor indeed on the hither side of Cataia."

He set the two pieces of Chinese pottery upon the shelves in the south corner of the room. These cups were of that sea-green tint called céladon, with a very wonderful glow and radiance. Such oddities were the last vogue at Court; and Cynthia could not but speculate as to what monstrous sum Lord Pevensey had paid for this his last gift to her.

Now he turned, smiling, a really superb creature in his blue and gold. "I had today another message from the Queen—"

"George," Cynthia said, with fond concern, "it frightens me to see you thus foolhardy, in tempting alike the Queen's anger and the Plague."

"Eh, as goes the Plague, it spares nine out of ten," he answered, lightly. "The Queen, I grant you, is another pair of sleeves, for an irritated Tudor spares nobody."

But Cynthia Allonby kept silence, and did not exactly smile, while she appraised her famous young kinsman. She was flattered by, and a little afraid of, the gay self-confidence which led anybody to take such chances. Two weeks ago it was that the terrible painted old Queen had named Lord Pevensey to go straightway into France, where, rumor had it, King Henri was preparing to renounce the Reformed Religion, and making his peace with the Pope: and for two weeks Pevensey had lingered, on one pretence or another, at his house in London, with the Plague creeping about the city like an invisible, incalculable flame, and the Queen asking questions at Windsor. Of all the monarchs that had ever reigned in England, Elizabeth Tudor was the least used to having her orders disregarded. Meanwhile Lord Pevensey came every day to the Marquis of Falmouth's lodgings at Deptford; and every day Lord Pevensey pointed out to the marquis' daughter that Pevensey, whose wife had died in childbirth a year back, did not intend to go into France, for nobody could foretell how long a stay, as a widower. Certainly it was all very flattering. . . . .

"Yes, and you would be an excellent match," said Cynthia, aloud, "if that were all. And yet, what must I reasonably expect in marrying, sir, the famous Earl of Pevensey?"

"A great deal of love and petting, my dear. And if there were anything else to which you had a fancy, I would get it for you."

Her glance went to those lovely cups and lingered fondly. "Yes, dear Master Generosity, if it could be purchased or manufactured, you would get it for me—"

"If it exists I will get it for you," he declared.

"I think that it exists. But I am not learned enough to know what it is. George, if I married you I would have money and fine clothes and gilded coaches, and an army of maids and pages, and honor from all men. And you would be kind to me, I know, when you returned from the day's work at Windsor—or Holyrood or the Louvre. But do you not see that I would always be to you only a rather costly luxury, like those cups, which the Queen's minister could afford to keep for his hours of leisure?"

He answered: "You are all in all to me. You know it. Oh, very well do you know and abuse your power, you adorable and lovely baggage, who have kept me dancing attendance for a fortnight, without ever giving me an honest yes or no." He gesticulated. "Well, but life is very dull in Deptford village, and it amuses you to twist a Queen's adviser around your finger! I see it plainly, you minx, and I acquiesce because it delights me to give you pleasure, even at the cost of some dignity. Yet I may no longer shirk the Queen's business—no, not even to amuse you, my dear."

"You said you had heard from her—again?"

"I had this morning my orders, under Gloriana's own fair hand, either to depart tomorrow into France or else to come tomorrow to Windsor. I need not say that in the circumstances I consider France the more wholesome."

Now the girl's voice was hurt and wistful. "So, for the thousandth time, is it proven the Queen's business means more to you than I do. Yes, certainly it is just as I said, George."

He observed, unruffled: "My dear, I scent unreason. This is a high matter. If the French King compounds with Rome, it means war for Protestant England. Even you must see that."

She replied, sadly: "Yes, even I! oh, certainly, my lord, even a half-witted child of seventeen can perceive as much as that."

"I was not speaking of half-witted persons, as I remember. Well, it chances that I am honored by the friendship of our gallant Béarnais, and am supposed to have some claim upon him, thanks to my good fortune last year in saving his life from the assassin Barrière. It chances that I may perhaps become, under providence, the instrument of preserving my fellow countrymen from much grief and trumpet-sounding and throat-cutting. Instead of pursuing that chance, two weeks ago—as was my duty—I have dangled at your apron-strings, in the vain hope of softening the most variable and hardest heart in the world. Now, clearly, I have not the right to do that any longer."

She admired the ennobled, the slightly rapt look which, she knew, denoted that George Bulmer was doing his duty as he saw it, even in her disappointment. "No, you have not the right. You are wedded to your statecraft, to your patriotism, to your self-advancement, or christen it what you will. You are wedded, at all events, to your man's business. You have not the time for such trifles as giving a maid that foolish and lovely sort of wooing to which every maid looks forward in her heart of hearts. Indeed, when you married the first time it was a kind of infidelity; and I am certain that poor, dear mouse-like Mary must have felt that often and over again. Why, do you not see, George, even now, that your wife will always come second to your real love?"

"In my heart, dear sophist, you will always come first. But it is not permitted that any loyal gentleman devote every hour of his life to sighing and making sonnets, and to the general solacing of a maid's loneliness in this dull little Deptford. Nor would you, I am sure, desire me to do so."

"I hardly know what I desire," she told him ruefully. "But I know that when you talk of your man's business I am lonely and chilled and far away from you. And I know that I cannot understand more than half your fine high notions about duty and patriotism and serving England and so on," the girl declared: and she flung wide her lovely little hands, in a despairing gesture. "I admire you, sir, when you talk of England. It makes you handsomer—yes, even handsomer!—somehow. But all the while I am remembering that England is just an ordinary island inhabited by a number of ordinary persons, for the most of whom I have no particular feeling one way or the other."

Pevensey looked down at her for a while with queer tenderness. Then he smiled. "No, I could not quite make you understand, my dear. But, ah, why fuddle that quaint little brain by trying to understand such matters as lie without your realm? For a woman's kingdom is the home, my dear, and her throne is in the heart of her husband—"

"All this is but another way of saying your lordship would have us cups upon a shelf," she pointed out—"in readiness for your leisure."

He shrugged, said "Nonsense!" and began more lightly to talk of other matters. Thus and thus he would do in France, such and such trinkets he would fetch back—"as toys for the most whimsical, the loveliest, and the most obstinate child in all the world," he phrased it. And they would be married, Pevensey declared, in September: nor (he gaily said) did he propose to have any further argument about it. Children should be seen—the proverb was dusty, but it particularly applied to pretty children.

Cynthia let him talk. She was just a little afraid of his self-confidence, and of this tall nobleman's habit of getting what he wanted, in the end: but she dispiritedly felt that Pevensey had failed her. Why, George Bulmer treated her as if she were a silly infant; and his want of her, even in that capacity, was a secondary matter: he was going into France, for all his petting talk, and was leaving her to shift as she best might, until he could spare the time to resume his love-making. . . . .

II. What Comes of Scribbling

Now when Pevensey had gone the room seemed darkened by the withdrawal of so much magnificence. Cynthia watched from the window as the tall earl rode away, with three handsomely clad retainers. Yes, George was very fine and admirable, no doubt of it: even so, there was relief in the reflection that for a month or two she was rid of him.

Turning, she faced a lean, dishevelled man, who stood by the Magdalen tapestry scratching his chin. He had unquiet bright eyes, this out-at-elbows poet whom a marquis' daughter was pleased to patronize, and his red hair was unpardonably tousled. Nor were his manners beyond reproach, for now, without saying anything, he, too, went to the window. He dragged one foot a little as he walked.

"So my lord Pevensey departs! Look how he rides in triumph! like lame Tamburlaine, with Techelles and Usumcasane and Theridamas to attend him, and with the sunset turning the dust raised by their horses' hoofs into a sort of golden haze about them. It is a beautiful world. And truly, Mistress Cyn," the poet said, reflectively, "that Pevensey is a very splendid ephemera. If not a king himself, at least he goes magnificently to settle the affairs of kings. Were modesty not my failing, Mistress Cyn, I would acclaim you as strangely lucky, in being beloved by two fine fellows that have not their like in England."

"Truly, you are not always thus modest, Kit Marlowe—"

"But, Lord, how seriously Pevensey takes it all! and takes himself in particular! Why, there departs from us, in befitting state, a personage whose opinion as to every topic in the world is written legibly in the carriage of those fine shoulders, even when seen from behind and from so considerable a distance. And in not one syllable do any of these opinions differ from the opinions of his great-great-grandfathers. Oho, and hark to Deptford! now all the oafs in the Cornmarket are cheering this bulwark of Protestant England, this rising young hero of a people with no nonsense about them. Yes, it is a very quaint and rather splendid ephemera."

The daughter of a marquis could not quite approve of the way in which this shoemaker's son, however talented, railed at his betters. "Pevensey will be the greatest man in these kingdoms some day. Indeed, Kit Marlowe, there are those who say he is that much already."

"Oh, very probably! Still, I am puzzled by human greatness. A century hence what will he matter, this Pevensey? His ascent and his declension will have been completed, and his foolish battles and treaties will have given place to other foolish battles and treaties, and oblivion will have swallowed this glistening bluebottle, plumes and fine lace and stately ruff and all. Why, he is but an adviser to the queen of half an island, whereas my Tamburlaine was lord of all the golden ancient East: and what does my Tamburlaine matter now, save that he gave Kit Marlowe the subject of a drama? Hah, softly though! for does even that very greatly matter? Who really cares today about what scratches were made upon wax by that old Euripides, the latchet of whose sandals I am not worthy to unloose? No, not quite worthy, as yet!"

And thereupon the shabby fellow sat down in the tall leather-covered chair which Pevensey had just vacated: and this Marlowe nodded his flaming head portentously. "Hoh, look you, I am displeased, Mistress Cyn; I cannot lend my approval to this over-greedy oblivion that gapes for all. No, it is not a satisfying arrangement, that I should teeter insecurely through the void on a gob of mud, and be expected by and by to relinquish even that crazy foothold. Even for Kit Marlowe death lies in wait! and it may be, not anything more after death, not even any lovely words to play with. Yes, and this Marlowe may amount to nothing, after all: and his one chance of amounting to that which he intends may be taken away from him at any moment!"

He touched the breast of a weather-beaten doublet. He gave her that queer twisted sort of smile which the girl could not but find attractive, somehow. He said: "Why, but this heart thumping here inside me may stop any moment like a broken clock. Here is Euripides writing better than I: and here in my body, under my hand, is the mechanism upon which depend all those masterpieces that are to blot the Athenian from the reckoning, and I have no control of it!"

"Indeed, I fear that you control few things," she told him, "and that least of all do you control your taste for taverns and bad women. Oh, I hear tales of you!" And Cynthia raised a reproving forefinger.

"True tales, no doubt." He shrugged. "Lacking the moon he vainly cried for, the child learns to content himself with a penny whistle."

"Ah, but the moon is far away," the girl said, smiling—"too far to hear the sound of human crying: and besides, the moon, as I remember it, was never a very amorous goddess—"

"Just so," he answered: "also she was called Cynthia, and she, too, was beautiful."

"Yet is it the heart that cries to me, my poet?" she asked him, softly, "or just the lips?"

"Oh, both of them, most beautiful and inaccessible of goddesses." Then Marlowe leaned toward her, laughing and shaking that disreputable red head. "Still, you are very foolish, in your latest incarnation, to be wasting your rays upon carpet earls who will not outwear a century. Were modesty not my failing, I repeat, I could name somebody who will last longer. Yes, and—if but I lacked that plaguey virtue—I would advise you to go a-gypsying with that nameless somebody, so that two manikins might snatch their little share of the big things that are eternal, just as the butterfly fares intrepidly and joyously, with the sun for his torchboy, through a universe wherein thought cannot estimate the unimportance of a butterfly, and wherein not even the chaste moon is very important. Yes, certainly I would advise you to have done with this vanity of courts and masques, of satins and fans and fiddles, this dallying with tinsels and bright vapors; and very movingly I would exhort you to seek out Arcadia, traveling hand in hand with that still nameless somebody." And of a sudden the restless man began to sing. Sang Kit Marlowe:

> *"Come live with me and be my love,*
> *And we will all the pleasures prove*
> *That hills and valleys, dales and fields,*
> *Woods or steepy mountain yields.*
>
> *"And we will sit upon the rocks,*
> *And see the shepherds feed their flocks*
> *By shallow rivers, to whose falls*
> *Melodious birds sing madrigals—"*

But the girl shook her small, wise head decisively. "That is all very fine, but, as it happens, there is no such place as this Arcadia, where people can frolic in perpetual sunlight the year round, and find their food and clothing miraculously provided. No, nor can you, I am afraid, give me what all maids really, in their heart of hearts, desire far more than any sugar-candy Arcadia. Oh, as I have so often told you, Kit, I think you love no woman. You love words. And your seraglio is tenanted by very beautiful words, I grant you, though there is no longer any Sestos builded of agate and crystal, either, Kit Marlowe. For, as you may perceive, sir, I have read all that lovely poem you left with me last Thursday—"

She saw how interested he was, saw how he almost smirked. "Aha, so you think it not quite bad, eh, the conclusion of my *Hero and Leander?*"

"It is your best. And your middlemost, my poet, is better than aught else in English," she said, politely, and knowing how much he delighted to hear such remarks.

"Come, I retract my charge of foolishness, for you are plainly a wench of rare discrimination. And yet you say I do not love you! Cynthia, you are beautiful, you are perfect in all things. You are that heavenly Helen of whom I wrote, some persons say, acceptably enough. How strange it was I did not know that Helen was dark-haired and pale! for certainly yours is that immortal loveliness which must be served by poets in life and death."

"And I wonder how much of these ardors," she thought, "is kindled by my praise of his verses?" She bit her lip, and she regarded him with a hint of sadness. She said, aloud: "But I did not, after all, speak to Lord Pevensey concerning the printing of your poem. Instead, I burned your *Hero and Leander*."

She saw him jump, as under a whip-lash. Then he smiled again, in that wry fashion of his. "I lament the loss to letters, for it was my only copy. But you knew that."

"Yes, Kit, I knew it was your only copy."

"Oho! and for what reason did you burn it, may one ask?"

"I thought you loved it more than you loved me. It was my rival, I thought—" The girl was conscious of remorse, and yet it was remorse commingled with a mounting joy.

"And so you thought a jingle scribbled upon a bit of paper could be your rival with me!"

Then Cynthia no longer doubted, but gave a joyous little sobbing laugh, for the love of her disreputable dear poet was sustaining the stringent testing she had devised. She touched his freckled hand caressingly, and her face was as no man had ever seen it, and her voice, too, caressed him.

"Ah, you have made me the happiest of women, Kit! Kit, I am almost disappointed in you, though, that you do not grieve more for the loss of that beautiful poem."

His smiling did not waver; yet the lean, red-haired man stayed motionless. "Why, but see how lightly I take the destruction of my life-work in this, my masterpiece! For I can assure you it was a masterpiece, the fruit of two years' toil and of much loving repolishment—"

"Ah, but you love me better than such matters, do you not?" she asked him, tenderly. "Kit Marlowe, I adore you! Sweetheart, do you not understand that a woman wants to be loved utterly and entirely? She wants no rivals, not even paper rivals. And so often when you talked of poetry I have felt lonely and chilled and far away from you, and I have been half envious, dear, of your Heros and Helens, and your other good-for-nothing Greek minxes. But now I do not mind them at all. And I will make amends, quite prodigal amends, for my naughty jealousy: and my poet shall write me some more lovely poems, so he shall—"

He said: "You fool!"

And she drew away from him, for this man was no longer smiling.

"You burned my *Hero and Leander!* You! you big-eyed fool! You lisping idiot! you wriggling, cuddling worm! you silken bag of guts! had not even you the wit to perceive it was immortal beauty which would have lived long after you and I were stinking dirt? And you, a half-witted animal, a shining, chattering parrot, lay claws to it!" Marlowe had risen in a sort of seizure, in a condition which was really quite unreasonable when you considered that only a poem was at stake, even a rather long poem.

And Cynthia began to smile, with tremulous hurt-looking young lips. "So my poet's love is very much the same as Pevensey's love! And I was right, after all."

"Oh, oh!" said Marlowe, "that ever a poet should love a woman! What jokes does the lewd flesh contrive!" Of a sudden he was calmer; and then rage fell away from him like a dropped cloak, and he viewed her as with respectful wonder. "Why, but you sitting there, with goggling innocent bright eyes, are an allegory of all that is most droll and tragic. Yes, and indeed there is no reason to blame you. It is not your fault that every now and then is born a man who serves an idea which is to him the most important thing in the world. It is not your fault that this man perforce inhabits a body to which the most important thing in the world is a woman. Certainly it is not your fault that this compost makes yet another jumble of his two desires, and persuades himself that the two are somehow allied. The woman inspires, the woman uplifts, the woman strengthens him for his high work, saith he! Well, well, perhaps there are such women, but by land and sea I have encountered none of them."

All this was said while Marlowe shuffled about the room, with bent shoulders, and nodding his tousled red head, and limping as he walked. Now Marlowe turned, futile and shabby-looking, just where a while ago Lord Pevensey had loomed resplendent. Again she saw the poet's queer, twisted, jeering smile.

"What do you care for my ideals? What do you care for the ideals of that tall earl whom for a fortnight you have held from his proper business? or for the ideals of any man alive? Why, not one thread of that dark hair, not one snap of those white little fingers, except when ideals irritate you by distracting a man's attention from Cynthia Allonby. Otherwise, he is welcome enough to play with his incomprehensible toys."

He jerked a thumb toward the shelves behind him.

"Oho, you virtuous pretty ladies! what all you value is such matters as those cups: they please the eye, they are worth sound money, and people envy you the possession of them. So you cherish your shiny mud cups, and you burn my *Hero and Leander:* and I declaim all this dull nonsense over the ashes of my ruined dreams, thinking at bottom of how pretty you are, and of how much I would like to kiss you. That is the real tragedy, the immemorial tragedy, that I should still hanker after you, my Cynthia—" His voice dwelt tenderly upon her name. His fever-haunted eyes were tender, too, for just a moment. Then he grimaced.

"No, I was wrong—the tragedy strikes deeper. The root of it is that there is in you and in all your glittering kind no malice, no will to do harm nor to hurt anything, but just a bland and invincible and, upon the whole, a well-meaning stupidity, informing a bright and soft and delicately scented animal. So you work ruin among those men who serve ideals, not foreplanning ruin, not desiring to ruin anything, not even having sufficient wit to perceive the ruin when it is accomplished. You are, when all is done, not even detestable, not even a worthy peg whereon to hang denunciatory sonnets, you shallow-pated pretty creatures whom poets—oh, and in youth all men are poets!—whom poets, now and always, are doomed to hanker after to the detriment of their poesy. No, I concede it: you kill without premeditation, and without ever suspecting your hands to be anything but stainless. So in logic I must retract all my harsh words; and I must, without any hint or reproach, endeavor to bid you a somewhat more civil farewell."

She had regarded him, throughout this preposterous and uncalled-for harangue, with sad composure, with a forgiving pity. Now she asked him, very quietly, "Where are you going, Kit?"

"To the Golden Hind, O gentle, patient, and unjustly persecuted virgin martyr!" he answered, with an exaggerated bow—"since that is the part in which you now elect to posture."

"Not to that low, vile place again!"

"But certainly I intend in that tavern to get tipsy as quickly as possible: for then the first woman I see will for the time become the woman whom I desire, and who exists nowhere." And with that the red-haired man departed, limping and singing as he went to look for a trull in a pothouse. Sang Kit Marlowe:

"And I will make her beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

"A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold—"

III. ECONOMICS OF EGERIA

She sat quite still when Marlowe had gone.

"He will get drunk again," she thought despondently. "Well, and why should it matter to me if he does, after all that outrageous ranting? He has been unforgivably insulting—Oh, but none the less, I do not want to have him babbling of the roses and gold of that impossible fairy world which the poor, frantic child really believes in, to some painted woman of the town who will laugh at him. I loathe the thought of her laughing at him—and kissing him! His notions are wild foolishness; but I at least wish that they were not foolishness, and that hateful woman will not care one way or the other."

So Cynthia sighed, and to comfort her forlorn condition fetched a hand-mirror from the shelves whereon glowed her green cups. She touched each cup caressingly in passing; and that which she found in the mirror, too, she regarded not unappreciatively, from varying angles. . . . . Yes, after all, dark hair and a pale skin had their advantages at a court where pink and yellow women were so much the fashion as to be common. Men remembered you more distinctively. Though nobody cared for men, in view of their unreasonable behavior, and their absolute self-centeredness. . . . . Oh, it was pitiable, it was grotesque, she reflected sadly, how Pevensey and Kit Marlowe had both failed her, after so many pretty speeches.

Still, there was a queer pleasure in being wooed by Kit: his insane notions went to one's head like wine. She would send Meg for him again tomorrow. And Pevensey was, of course, the best match imaginable. . . . . No, it would be too heartless to dismiss George Bulmer outright. It was unreasonable of him to desert her because a Gascon threatened to go to mass; but, after all, she would probably marry George in the end. He was really almost unendurably silly, though, about England and freedom and religion and right and wrong things like that. Yes, it would be tedious to have a husband who often talked to you as though he were addressing a public assemblage. . . . . Yet, he was very handsome, particularly in his highflown and most tedious moments; that year-old son of his was sickly, and would probably die soon, the sweet forlorn little pet, and not be a bother to anybody: and her dear old father would be profoundly delighted by the marriage of his daughter to a man whose wife could have at will a dozen céladon cups, and anything else she chose to ask for. . . . .

But now the sun had set, and the room was growing quite dark. So Cynthia stood a-tiptoe, and replaced the mirror upon the shelves, setting it upright behind those wonderful green cups which had anew reminded her of Pevensey's wealth and generosity. She smiled a little, to think of what fun it had been to hold George back, for two whole weeks, from discharging that horrible old queen's stupid errands.

IV. Treats Philosophically of Breakage

The door opened. Stalwart young Captain Edward Musgrave came with a lighted candle, which he placed carefully upon the table in the room's centre.

He said: "They told me you were here. I come from London. I bring news for you."

"You bring no pleasant tidings, I fear—"

"As Lord Pevensey rode through the Strand this afternoon, on his way home, the Plague smote him. That is my sad news. I grieve to bring such news, for your cousin was a worthy gentleman and universally respected."

"Ah," Cynthia said, very quiet, "so Pevensey is dead. But the Plague kills quickly!"

"Yes, yes, that is a comfort, certainly. Yes, he turned quite black in the face, they report, and before his men could reach him had fallen from his horse. It was all over almost instantly. I saw him afterward, hardly a pleasant sight. I came to you as soon as I could. I was vexatiously detained—"

"So George Bulmer is dead, in a London gutter! It seems strange, because he was here, befriended by monarchs, and very strong and handsome and self-confident, hardly two hours ago. Is that his blood upon your sleeve?"

"But of course not! I told you I was vexatiously detained, almost at your gates. Yes, I had the ill luck to blunder into a disgusting business. The two rapscallions tumbled out of a doorway under my horse's very nose, egad! It was a near thing I did not ride them down. So I stopped, naturally. I regretted stopping, afterward, for I was too late to be of help. It was at the Golden Hind, of course. Something really ought to be done about that place. Yes, and that rogue Marler bled all over a new doublet, as you see. And the Deptford constables held me with their foolish interrogatories—"

"So one of the fighting men was named Marlowe! Is he dead, too, dead in another gutter?"

"Marlowe or Marler, or something of the sort—wrote plays and sonnets and such stuff, they tell me. I do not know anything about him—though, I give you my word, now, those greasy constables treated me as though I were a noted frequenter of pot-houses. That sort of thing is most annoying. At all events, he was drunk as David's sow, and squabbling over, saving your presence, a woman of the sort one looks to find in that abominable hole. And so, as I was saying, this other drunken rascal dug a knife into him—"

But now, to Captain Musgrave's discomfort, Cynthia Allonby had begun to weep heartbrokenly.

So he cleared his throat, and he patted the back of her hand. "It is a great shock to you, naturally—oh, most naturally, and does you great credit. But come now, Pevensey is gone, as we must all go some day, and our tears cannot bring him back, my dear. We can but hope he is better off, poor fellow, and look on it as a mysterious dispensation and that sort of thing, my dear—"

"Oh, Ned, but people are so cruel! People will be saying that it was I who kept poor Cousin George in London this past two weeks, and that but for me he would have been in France long ago! And then the Queen, Ned!—why, that pig-headed old woman will be blaming it on me, that there is nobody to prevent that detestable French King from turning Catholic and dragging England into new wars, and I shall not be able to go to any of the Court dances! nor to the masques!" sobbed Cynthia, "nor anywhere!"

"Now you talk tender-hearted and angelic nonsense. It is noble of you to feel that way, of course. But Pevensey did not take proper care of himself, and that is all there is to it. Now I have remained in London since the Plague's outbreak. I stayed with my regiment, naturally. We have had a few deaths, of course. People die everywhere. But the Plague has never bothered me. And why has it never bothered me? Simply because I was sensible, took the pains to consult an astrologer, and by his advice wear about my neck, night and day, a bag containing tablets of toads' blood and arsenic. It is an infallible specific for men born in February. No, not for a moment do I wish to speak harshly of the dead, but sensible persons cannot but consider Lord Pevensey's death to have been caused by his own carelessness."

"Now, certainly that is true," the girl said, brightening. "It was really his own carelessness and his dear lovable rashness. And somebody could explain it to the Queen. Besides, I often think that wars are good for the public spirit of a nation, and bring out its true manhood. But then it upset me, too, a little, Ned, to hear about this Marlowe—for I must tell you that I knew the poor man, very slightly. So I happen to know that today he flung off in a rage, and began drinking, because somebody, almost by pure chance, had burned a packet of his verses—"

Thereupon Captain Musgrave raised heavy eyebrows, and guffawed so heartily that the candle flickered. "To think of the fellow's putting it on that plea! when he could so easily have written some more verses. That is the trouble with these poets, if you ask me: they are not practical even in their ordinary, everyday lying. No, no, the truth of it was that the rogue wanted a pretext for making a beast of himself, and seized the first that came to hand. Egad, my dear, it is a daily practice with these poets. They hardly draw a sober breath. Everybody knows that."

Cynthia was looking at him in the half-lit room with very flattering admiration. . . . . Seen thus, with her scarlet lips a little parted — disclosing pearls — and with her naïve dark eyes aglow, she was quite incredibly pretty and caressable. She had almost forgotten until now that this stalwart soldier, too, was in love with her. But now her spirits were rising venturously, and she knew that she liked Ned Musgrave. He had sensible notions; he saw things as they really were, and with him there would never be any nonsense about toplofty ideas. Then, too, her dear old white-haired father would be pleased, because there was a very fair estate. . . . .

So Cynthia said: "I believe you are right, Ned. I often wonder how they can be so lacking in self-respect. Oh, I am certain you must be right, for it is just what I felt without being able quite to express it. You will stay for supper with us, of course. Yes, but you must, because it is always a great comfort for me to talk with really sensible persons. I do not wonder that you are not very eager to stay, though, for I am probably a fright, with my eyes red, and with my hair all tumbling down, like an old witch's. Well, let us see what can be done about it, sir! There was a hand-mirror —"

And thus speaking, she tripped, with very much the reputed grace of a fairy, toward the far end of the room, and standing a-tiptoe, groped at the obscure shelves, with a resultant crash of falling china.

"Oh, but my lovely cups!" said Cynthia, in dismay. "I had forgotten they were up there: and now I have smashed both of them, in looking for my mirror, sir, and trying to prettify myself for you. And I had so fancied them, because they had not their like in England!"

She looked at the fragments, and then at Musgrave, with wide, innocent hurt eyes. She was really grieved by the loss of her quaint toys. But Musgrave, in his sturdy, common-sense way, only laughed at her seriousness over such kickshaws.

"I am for an honest earthenware tankard myself!" he said, jovially, as the two went in to supper.

James Branch Cabell

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Joseph Hergesheimer (1880—)

THE TAILOR

As he came down the steps of his club, Harvey Ellis was conscious of a new mildness in the air; the edge of winter was perceptibly dulled, auriferous masses of jonquils filled the flowerstands at the street corners; a woman in a victoria wore a bright blue straw hat. He paused on the wet pavement, saturated his lungs with narcotic cigarette smoke and rehearsed in his mind the various possibilities of the afternoon. He had seen all the matinees; heavy with mutton and ale, he did not feel equal to the effort required by a ride in the park; and for the same reason he felt himself to be incapable of conversation. The warm, moist air struck pleasantly upon his face, but in the changed temperature, his winter garb hung heavily upon him. He made a mental note to have Hodgson get out some lighter things, and the thought was accompanied by a suggestion for the employment of his immediate empty time.

He would go to his tailor.

It was but two squares away, on the same exclusive street as his exclusive club and various exclusive hotels and print shops: and he covered the distance leisurely, with his pigskin stick hung on an immaculate arm, the scent of the gardenia in his buttonhole honeysweet about him.

In appearance he was a rotund, heavily jowled gentleman of perhaps forty-five years, clad in irreproachable garments about which hung the undefinable air of caste; merely the back of his neck, where it bulged slightly from the confines of a heavy linen collar, under a low and slightly raked hat-brim, was unmistakably smart. His yellow boots shone with the restrained spendor of specially imported dressing.

The glittering plateglass window, whereon inconspicuously placed in a corner chaste gold letters announced his firm of tailors, exhibited nothing but a white wooden screen of impeccable colonial design, and the few steps that led up to the entrance, dignified by a fine brass knocker, were of spotless marble. Within, the walls were panelled in satinwood, and mahogany tables resting upon intricate marquetry bore roll after roll of clothing stuffs. A little man in a quiet English morning coat bowed obsequiously as Harvey Ellis entered.

"Mr. Ellis," he said, "a fine day, sir. What can I show you, sir?" As he spoke a second appeared, a member of the firm, who embellished the clerk's greeting with his own.

"We have some fine things, Mr. Ellis," said the latter; "the newest suitings—Harris tweeds, Donegal homespuns in which you can still smell the peat smoke, diagonals, vicuñas, Martin serges—"

"Several little things I need," said Mr. Ellis, "for the warmer weather—a morning suit, dress waistcoats, trousers, and a lighter oversack."

"Good," said the member of the firm. "Mr. Dawson, show Mr. Ellis the new waistcoats; they were handloomed for us, one waistcoat to the pattern." The clerk bowed, and, crossing the room, opened a drawer from which he took a pile of folded cloths, in delicate mauves, grays, and rose. "Something very fine, sir," he said.

Harvey Ellis looked them over critically. "I'll take this one," he said, putting aside a gray in which a fine flower was woven into the design; "and this, and this." In all he selected five, giving to the choice a matter of half an hour, lingering over a pale orange affair, which he finally rejected.

"Forty-five dollars each," said the clerk, in a low voice. The member of the firm frowned upon him, for thus indelicately mentioning money; Harvey Ellis turned his back impatiently upon him. "Two hundred and twenty-five dollars," the clerk continued silently, "for waistcoats; two hundred and twenty-five dollars." Suddenly and unaccountably it depressed him.

"Now about the oversack," he proceeded; "may I suggest this?" He produced a roll of buff-colored homespun, into which were woven flecks of bright scarlet, green, duller purple and yellow: "it is very unusual, yet quiet, quiet; and it would give you splendid service."

Service! The member of the firm made a mental note that he would speak to his subordinate on the subject of a gentleman's requirements, the tone of the establishment would suffer from such commonplace considerations. Service! Harvey Ellis was obviously bored at the idea. He fingered the material, comparing it with a luxurious brown diagonal, weighing them profoundly. He frowned, fingered the point of his small moustache.

Other materials were laid before him, which he folded and regarded through critical eyes. But in the end he bowed to the clerk's selection, offering suggestions and modifications of the proposed design. The subject of patched pockets occupied them for quite ten minutes: they were undeniably smart, but the stuff itself was just a trifle—would not the effect be a little too—in the end they decided against patched pockets.

"To button through," said the member briskly.

"Not at all," retorted Harvey Ellis; "I would look like a tout."

The other was pained by the comparison; nevertheless his manner clearly indicated buttoning through as the correct thing. "A light coat like this," he said, "cut full in the skirt, should avoid the formal. But just as you say," he deferred to Ellis; "your taste is exceptional."

"No change pocket," said Harvey Ellis sternly, "nor breast pocket either, they spoil the set."

The result was duly put on paper to the fullest detail, scrupulously exact. Two hundred and twenty-five dollars and a hundred and ninety, thought the clerk, were four hundred and fifteen. With apparent irrelevance he counted the number of children his wife had borne him. From that his mind swung round to the cost of living, the rapacity of insurance collectors, and other ill-bred and coarse considerations.

Trousers next occupied them; trousers with checks and pin stripes, mauve trousers and trousers of grey and pepper and salt, intricate trousers and trousers plain, trousers bold but not obvious, modest and retiring trousers—the brief word pants rang through the clerk's brain; once he almost pronounced it in place of the more elegant term, and a sweat broke out on his brow as the probable consequence of such a slip obtruded upon him; that he would be dismissed was too obvious for thought; the attending shock to his employer was what froze him.

Trousers were a mania with Harvey Ellis, to them he gave many hours of undivided thought, he was famous for them. He had been complimented on the *grands boulevards* for them, the sheathing of his nether limbs had been commented upon by a Certain Royal Personage, in the very stronghold of trouserdom. It was a serious matter; the member wore an appropriate, a solemn, countenance; his soul was thrilling gloriously to the high subject in hand. The clerk hung the stuffs over his arm, he folded them into imitation creases, cunningly bringing out the niceties of weave and line. Altogether Ellis spent two hundred and forty dollars on trousers.

That rite at an end the member drew an easier breath. He broached the subject of a new dress coat almost frivolously. "Superlative," he exclaimed, "superlative." He held up the material for Harvey Ellis's inspection. "Why, it's blue," that personage cried; "now that's too bad really, you know I don't go in for that sort of thing; it's radical, it's downright dangerous. No, no!"

The member heroically ventured to lay a soothing hand on Harvey Ellis's shoulder; his expression grew confidential, it resembled that of a prime minister revealing a complicated state secret to his sovereign. "It's absolutely black at night," he said. The other was mollified; it was, he admitted generously, a notable idea. He ordered one. "Notched at the side to give access to the trouser pockets?" this deprecatingly from the clerk. The member nodded approvingly to his Mr. Dawson. Thought the latter—an hundred and eighty-five dollars for the dress coat; translated into cans of beans he wondered how far it would reach from end to end? His thoughts became slightly hysterical, he wondered if his sanity were slipping from him, and sternly centered his attention on Harvey Ellis. With a practised eye he ran over the other's proportions.

"I think," he alluded, "we had better take Mr. Ellis's measure. In the spring he is a little heavier."

"Rot," exclaimed Harvey Ellis, irritably, "my belt's at the same hole." He was flushed with annoyance; he breathed in short, sharp gasps, and his fingers fumbled with the crook of his stick. Why did they keep the place so infernally hot?

"Only a second." The member had a measure, and was running his hand around the waist in question. He looked critically at the result. "Nothing of any moment," he announced, "a little increase, perfectly natural under the circumstances." An imp of the perverse seized the clerk, not for his life or position could he keep silent. "A good three inches," he announced. The expression on his employer's countenance told him that their connections were severed. His animation died like the life from a glass of champagne, leaving a flat, stale feeling in his heart; he wearily folded up the bales of cloth wondering how he would explain their loss to his wife.

The color of Harvey Ellis's face deepened, he glared with wrath at the member, and stuttered something of his resentment. Then the heat seemed to rise in an intolerable wave to his head. "Air," he said in a thin, strange voice. He walked quickly and unsteadily to the door, and passed out to the steps. "Too much bass," he gasped, "and mutton. . . . . . I'll leave it all alone . . . . . clear water . . . . . if better this once." The street grew black. The member of the firm, and Mr. Dawson, and a cutter in a green apron, carried the very correctly garbed body of Harvey Ellis into the shop.

Joseph Hergesheimer

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Robert Nathan (1894—)

SCHOOL LETS OUT

The next day being a holiday, Mr. Jeminy lay in bed, watching, through his window, the branches of an oak tree, which is last of all to leaf. When he finally arose, the morning was already bright and hot; the rooms were swept; all was in order.

Later in the day he followed Mrs. Grumble to the schoolhouse, carrying a pail, soap, a scrubbing brush, and a broom. After Mr. Jeminy had filled the pail with water at the school pump, Mrs. Grumble got down on her knees, and began to scrub the floor. The schoolmaster went ahead with the broom. "Sweep in all the corners," she said. "For," she added, "it's in the corners one finds everything." As she spoke, the brush, under her freckled hands, pushed forward a wave of soapy water, edged with foam, like the sea.

Mr. Jeminy swept up and down with a sort of solemn joy; he even took pride in the little mountain of brown dirt he had collected with his broom, and watched it leap across the threshold with regret. He would have liked to keep it. . . . . Then he could have said, "Well, at least, I took all this dirt from under the desks."

The truth is that Mr. Jeminy was not a very good teacher. Although, as a young man, he had read, in Latin and Greek, the work of Stoics, Gnostics, and Fathers of the Church, and although he had opinions about everything, he was unable to teach his pupils what they wished to learn, and they, in turn, were unable to understand what he wanted them to know. But that was not entirely his fault, for they came to school with such questions as: "How far is a thousand miles!"

"It is the distance between youth and age," said Mr. Jeminy. Then the children would start to laugh.

"A thousand miles," he would begin . . . .

By the time he had explained it, they were interested in something else.

This summer morning, a dusty fall of sunlight filled the little schoolroom with dancing golden motes. It seemed to Mr. Jeminy that he heard the voices of innumerable children whispering together; and it seemed to him that one voice, sweeter than all the rest, spoke in his own heart.

"Jeminy," it said, "Jeminy, what have you taught my children?"

Mr. Jeminy answered: "I have taught them to read the works of celebrated men, and to cheat each other with plus and minus."

"Ah," said another voice, with a dry chuckle like salt shaken in a saltcellar, "well, that's good."

"Who speaks?" cried Mr. Jeminy.

"What," exclaimed the voice, "don't you know me, old friend? I am plus and minus; I am weights and measures . . . . "

"Lord ha' mercy," cried Mrs. Grumble from the floor, "have you gone mad? Whatever are you doing, standing there, with your mouth open?"

"Eh!" said Mr. Jeminy, stupidly. "I was dreaming."

A red squirrel sped across the path, and stopped a moment in the doorway, his tail arched above his back, his bright, black eyes peering without envy at Mrs. Grumble, as she bent above the pail of soapsuds. Then, with a flirt of his tail, he hurried away, to hide from other squirrels the nuts, seeds, and acorns strewn by the winds of the autumn impartially over the earth.

In the afternoon, Mr. Jeminy went into his garden, and began to measure off rows of vegetables. "Two rows of beans," he said, "and two of radishes; they grow anywhere. I'll get Crabbe to give me onion sets, cabbages, and tomato plants. Two rows of peas, and one of lettuce; I must have fine soil for my lettuce, and I must remember to plant my peas deeply. A row of beets . . . ."

"Where," said Mrs. Grumble, who stood beside him, holding the hoe, "are you going to plant squash?"

" . . . . and carrots," continued Mr. Jeminy hurriedly. . . . .

"We must certainly have a few hills of squash," said Mrs. Grumble firmly.

"Oh," said Mr. Jeminy, "squash . . . ." He had left it out on purpose, because he disliked it. "You see," he said finally, looking about him artlessly, "there's no more room."

"Go away," said Mrs. Grumble.

From his seat under a tree, to which he had retired, Mr. Jeminy watched Mrs. Grumble mark the rows, hoe the straight, shallow furrows, drop in the seeds, and cover them with earth again. As he watched, half in indignation, he thought: "Thus, in other times, Ceres sowed the earth with seed, and, like Mrs. Grumble, planted my garden with squash. I would have asked her rather to sow melons here." Just then Mrs. Grumble came to the edge of the vegetable garden.

"Seed potatoes are over three dollars a bushel," she said; "it's hardly worth while putting them in."

"Then let's not put any in," Mr. Jeminy said promptly, "for they are difficult to weed, and when they are grown you must begin to quarrel with insects, for whose sake alone, I almost think, they grow at all."

"The bugs fall off," said Mrs. Grumble, "with a good shaking."

"Fie," said Mr. Jeminy, "how slovenly. It is better to kill them with lime. But it is best of all not to tempt them; then there is no need to kill them."

And as Mrs. Grumble made no reply, he added:

"That is something God has not learned yet."

"Please," said Mrs. Grumble, "speak of God with more respect."

After supper Mr. Jeminy sat in his study reading the story of Saint Francis, the Poor Brother of Assisi. One day, soon after the saint had left behind him the gay affairs of town, to embrace poverty, for Jesus' sake, and while he was still living in a hut of green branches near the little chapel of Saint Damian, he beheld his father coming to upbraid him for what he considered his son's obstinate folly. At once Saint Francis, who was possessed of a quick wit, began to gather together a number of old stones, which he tried to place one on top of the other. But as fast as he put them up, the stones, broken and uneven, fell down again. "Aha," cried old Bernadone, when he came up to his son, "I see how you are wasting your time. What are you doing? I am sick of you."

"I am building the world again," said Francis mildly; "it is all the more difficult because, for building material, I can find nothing but these old stones."

Mr. Jeminy gave his pupils their final examination in a meadow below the schoolhouse. There, seated among the dandelions, with voices as shrill as the crickets, they answered his questions, and watched the clouds, like great pillows, sail on the wind from west to east. Under the shiny sky, among the warm, sweet fields, Mr. Jeminy looked no more important than a robin, and not much wiser. Had the children been older, they would have tried all the more to please him, but because they were young, they laughed, teased each other, blew on blades of grass, and made dandelion chains. Mr. Jeminy examined the Fifth Reader. "Bound the United States," he said.

"On the west by the Pacific Ocean," began a red-cheeked plowboy, to whom the ocean was no more than hearsay.

"Where is San Francisco?"

"San Francisco is in California."

"Where is Seattle?"

But no one knew. Then Mr. Jeminy thought to himself. "I am not much wiser than that. For I think that Seattle is a little black period on a map. But to them, it is a name, like China, or Jerusalem; it is here, or there, in the stories they tell each other. And I believe their Seattle is full of interesting people."

"Well, then," he said, "let me hear you bound Vermont."

That was something everybody knew.

He took the First and Second Reader through their sums.

"Two apples and two apples make . . . . "

"Four apples."

"And three apples from eight apples leave . . . . "

"Five apples."

When spelling time came, the children, going down to the foot, rolled over each other in the grass, with loud shouts. At last only two were left to dispute the letters in asparagus, elephant, constancy, and philosophical. Then Mr. Jeminy gathered the children about him.

"The year is over," he said, "and you are free to play again. But do not forget over the summer what you learned with so much difficulty during the winter. Let me say to you who will not return to school: I have taught you to read, to write, to add and subtract; you know a little history, a little geography. Do not be proud of that. There are many things to learn; but you would not be any happier for having learned them.

"You will ask me what this has to do with you. I would like to teach you to be happy. For happiness is not in owning much, but in owning little: love, and liberty, the work of one's hands, fellowship, and peace. These things have no value; they are not to be bought; but they alone are worth having. Do not envy the rich man, for cares destroy his sleep. And do not ask the poor man not to sing, for song is all he has.

"Love poverty, and labor, the poverty of love, the wealth of the heart.

"Be wise and honest farmers.

"School is over. You may go."

The children ran away, laughing; the boys hurried off together to the swimming hole, their casual shouts stealing after them down the road. Mr. Jeminy, lying on his back in the grass, listened to them sadly. As the voices grew fainter and fainter, it seemed to him as if they were saying: "School is over, school is over." And he thought: "They are counting the seasons. But to the old, the year is never done."

* * * * * * * *

Mr. Jeminy came slowly out of the post-office, and turned up the road leading to his house. In one hand, crumpled in his pocket, he held his dismissal from Hillsboro school: "On account of age," it said. Next morning, at nine o'clock, the new teacher was coming to take over the little schoolhouse, with its splintered desks, the dusty blackboard, and the colored maps.

As he walked, the sun sank in the west, and evening crept up the road after him. The air was damp; he could see his breath pass out in fog before his face. The wind, blowing about his head, showered down the last dried, yellow leaves upon his path; before him he saw the chilly sky with its faint, lonely star, and over him the half moon, like a slice; and he heard the autumn wind, steady and cold. "You fields," he said, "you trees, you meadows and little paths, I do not believe you wanted to dismiss me. You must have enjoyed the daisy chains my pupils used to weave for you in the spring. Now they will learn the use of figures and per cents, and the names of cities I have forgot. I will never hear again the voices of children at the playhour come tumbling in through the school windows. For at my age one does not begin to teach again."

Robert Nathan

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James Gibbons Huneker (1860-1921)

POE AND HIS POLISH CONTEMPORARY

In the City of Boston, January 19, 1809, a son was born to David and Elizabeth Poe. On March 1, 1809, in the village of Zelazowa-Wola, twenty-eight English miles from Warsaw, in Poland, a son was born to Nicholas and Justina Chopin (Chopena or Szop). The American is known to the world as Edgar Allan Poe, the poet; the Pole as Frederic François Chopin, the composer. On October 7, 1849, Edgar Poe died, poor and neglected, in Washington Hospital at Baltimore, and on October 17, 1849, Frederic Chopin expired at Paris surrounded by loving friends, among whom were titled ladies. Turgenev has said there were at least one hundred princesses and countesses in whose arms the most wonderful among modern composers yielded up his soul. Poe and Chopin were contemporaries, and, curious coincidence, two supremely melancholy artists of the Beautiful lived and died almost synchronously.

My most enduring artistic passions are for the music of Chopin and the prose of Flaubert. In company with the cool, clear magic of a Jan Vermeer canvas, that of the Pole and Frenchman grazes perfection. But as a lad Chopin quite flooded my emotional horizon. I had conceived a fantastic comparison between Poe and Chopin, and I confess I was slightly piqued when Ignace Jan Paderewski, not then Premier of Poland, assured me that Chopin was born in the year 1810, and not the year earlier. The date chiselled on Chopin's Paris tomb in Pere Lachaise—a sad tribute to the mediocre art of Clésinger, who married Solange Sand—is, after all, the correct one.

The love of Poe began early with me. My father had been a friend of the poet's in Philadelphia, and a member of the Poe circle during the forties of the last century; "roaring forties," indeed. That prime old comedian, Billy Burton,

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the ideal Falstaff of his day; John Sartain, the engraver, and father of William Sartain, the painter; Judge Conrad who could move his listeners to tears when he recited the Lord's Prayer; the elder Booth, a noble tragedian much given to drink; Graham, the publisher, and several others whose names have escaped my memory, composed this interesting group. In his memoirs John Sartain has written of Poe and of a certain wild midnight walk in Fairmount Park. I remember the elder Sartain as an infrequent visitor at our house, and I also remember how I hung on his words when he spoke of Poe. My father told me that Poe would become a raving maniac after a thimbleful of brandy, so sensitive was his cerebral mechanism. But other authorities contradict this theory. Poe had been often seen to toss off a tumblerful of cognac neat. Last year at Atlantic City I met Mr. Hutzler, a well-known merchant of Baltimore, a spry young octogenarian and a seasoned raconteur. He told me, and in a vivid manner, of seeing Edgar Poe and Junius Brutus Booth hanging on to the same lamp-post, both helplessly drunk at midday. This happened about 1845, as the boys, Mr. Hutzler among the rest, trooped out to dinner from the public school on Holliday Street. Mr. Hutzler's memory has a mirror-like clearness, and he described the occurrence as if it had happened yesterday. Like irreverent schoolboys, they surrounded the greatest living Shakespearean actor and the greatest American poet and mocked at them.

We lived on North Seventh Street, and twice a day, on my trip to and from school, I passed the house where Poe had lived during his sojourn in Philadelphia, from 1838 to 1844. That house I should not have been able to locate today if my friend, Christopher Morley (charming writer, with a name that recalls spacious Elizabethan times: Kit Morley!), hadn't described it. This house, in which Poe wrote "The Raven" and "The Gold Bug," is at the northwest corner of Seventh and Brandywine Streets. Another critic friend, Albert Mordell, assures me that the old pear-tree in the back yard still bears fruit for the present resident, Mrs. Owens. The house is the rear building of another numbered 530 North Seventh Street. Mr. Mordell sent me a photograph which shows a typical Philadelphia red brick structure with white shutters and marble steps. I have heard of many spots where Poe wrote "The Raven," Fordham among the rest, but as boys we told ourselves when we stared at the old building: "Poe wrote his 'Raven' and 'Gold Bug' there!" It is something to remember in these piping times of hypocrisy and universal hatred of art, music, and literature.

It would be a strained parallel to compare Poe with Chopin at all points; nevertheless, chronological coincidences are not the only comparisons that might be instituted without exaggeration. True, the roots of Chopin's culture were more cosmopolitan, more richly nurtured than Poe's; the poet, like an air-plant, found his spiritual sustenance from sources unknown to the America of his day. Of Poe's intellectual ancestry, however, we may form some conception, though his learning was not profound, despite his copious quotations from half-forgotten and recondite authors, Glanvill, for example. Nevertheless, the matchless lines, "Helen, thy beauty is to me like those Nicean barks of yore," . . . . were struck off in the fire of a boyhood passion. Chopin had a careful training under the eye of his Polish teacher, Elsner; but who could have taught him how to compose his Opus 2, the Variations on Mozart's *La ci darem la mano?* Both Poe and Chopin were full fledged artists from the beginning, their individualities and limitations sharply defined. Perhaps the most exquisite music penned by Poe is this same "Helen," while the first mazourka of Chopin stamps him as an original poet. In the later productions of these men there is more than a savor of morbidity Consider the Fantaisie-Polonaise, Opus 61, with its most musical, most melancholy cadences; or the F minor Mazourka, composed during the last illness of Chopin; a sick brain betrays itself in the rhythmic insistence of the theme, a soul-weary "Wherefore?" In the haunting repetitions and harmonies of "Ulalume" there is a poetic analogue. This poem, in which sense swoons into sound, possesses a richness of color and rhythmic accent that betoken the mentality of a poet whose brain is perilously unhinged. If alcohol produced this condition, then might a grateful world erect altars to such a wondrous god of evocation. Prohibition has not thus far produced a Poe. But he wasn't the creation of either alcohol or drugs, though they were contributory causes; they prodded his cortical cells into abnormal activity, made leap the neuronic filaments with surprising consequences. No, a profound cerebral lesion was the real reason why Poe resorted to brandy to soothe his exacerbated nerves, and not because he drank did he go to wrack and ruin. His "case" is like Baudelaire's and E. T. W. Hoffmann's; not to mention the names of James Clarence Mangan and Monticelli, one the singer of "Dark Rosaleen," the other that master of gorgeous hues, fantasies of enchanted lands and crumbling linear designs.

Poe, then, like Chopin, did not die too soon. Neurotic natures, they lived their lives with the intensity which Walter Pater has declared is the true existence. "To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. Failure is to form habits." Alas! that way madness lies for the majority of mankind, notwithstanding the aesthetic exhortation of Pater. Poe and Chopin fulfilled the Pater conditions during their brief sojourn on our parent planet. They ever burned with the flame of genius, and that flame devoured them. They were not citizens of moral repute. Nor did they accumulate "mortal pelf." They failed to form habits, and while the psychic delicacy of Chopin proved a barrier against self-indulgence of the grosser sort, he contrived to outrage social and ethical canons even in tolerant Paris. The influence of George Sand, her ascendancy over his volition, worked evil and unhappiness. The delicate porcelain of his genius could not float down-stream in company with her brassy ware without ensuing disaster for the finer of the twain. Alcoholic neurosis did not trouble him, but he was tubercular, and that malady is more fatal than alcoholism. Poe was not precisely a drunkard; probably masked epilepsy accounts for his vagaries; such victims are periodical dipsomaniacs, "circulaires" is the term of the psychiatrists. His personality was winning, his speech electric, his eye alight with genius; but, then, the obverse of the medal! A sad, slouching creature, with a cynic's sneer, a bitter tongue which lashed friend and foe alike, a gambler, a libertine—what has this unhappy poet not been called? Baudelaire asked whether the critical hyenas could not have been prevented from defacing the tomb of Poe. (He used Rabelaisian language in the original French.) Charles Baudelaire, a spiritual double of Poe, was another unhappy wraith of genius, and of the same choir of self-lacerated and damned souls.

Fancy Poe and Chopin in New York during the prosaic atmosphere of those days! If Chopin had not achieved artistic success at the Soiree of Prince Radziwill in Paris, 1831, he would probably have gone to America, where he might have met Poe. He had declared his intention to leave Paris for New York, and his passport was viséed "passing through." Poe and Chopin conversing! The idea is rather disquieting. Stendhal, not hoodwinked by Chateaubriand with his purple phrases and poetic visions of virgin forests and sweet Indian girls in an impossible Louisiana, declared that America was materialistic beyond hope of redemption. Talleyrand knew better. However, it was better for the artistic development of the Polish composer that he remained in the Old World. Think of Chopin giving piano lessons to the daughters of the New-Rich at the fashionable

Battery, and Poe encountering him at some *conversazione*—they had *conversaziones* then—and propounding to him Heine-like questions: Are the roses at home still in their flame-hued pride? Do the trees sing as beautifully as ever in the moonlight? Are humming-birds and star-dust—Francesca Astra—still as rare as ambergris? At a glance Poe and Chopin would have sympathized. In sensibility the American was not inferior to the Pole. Poe would have felt the "drummed tears" in the playing of Chopin, and in turn Chopin would not have failed to divine the vibrations of Poe's high-strung nature. Both men were mystics, were seers. What a meeting that would have been; yet inevitable misery might have come to the Pole in unsympathetic New York. A different tale if Poe had gone to Paris and enjoyed a meed of artistic success. Baudelaire, who was born in April, 1821, therefore a young chap in 1845, would have known him, and, congenial souls, they would surely have gone to the devil quicker than apart. Baudelaire and Poe! There's a marvelous combination for you of fantasy, moonlight, rotten nerves, hasheesh, and alcohol! The fine flower of the genius of Poe might have bloomed more fragrantly on French soil; perhaps with the added note of depravity not in his sexless creations, and so corroding a note in *Les Fleurs du Mal.* Who may dare say! But then we might not have had the sinister melancholia, so sweetly despairing, so despairingly sweet, that we enjoy in the real Poe.

The culture of Chopin was not of a finer stamp than Poe's, nor was his range so wide. In their intellectual sympathies both were rather narrow, though intense to an emotional poignancy, and both were remarkable in mood-versatility. Born aristocrats, purple raiment became them well. Both were sadly deficient in planturous humor and the Attic salt that conserves the self-mockery of Heine. Irony they possessed to a superlative degree. Both created rhythmic beauty, evoked the charm of evanescence. A crepuscular art; the notations of twilit souls and the "October of the sensations." Both were at their best in smaller artistic forms. When either one spread his pinions for symphonic flight we think of Matthew Arnold's interpretation of Shelley: "beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." Which phrase truly is of Mat's own making, yet somehow misses the essential Shelley. Poe and Chopin supremely mastered their intellectual instruments. Artificers in precious cameos, they are of an artistic consanguinity because of their extraordinary absorption in the Beautiful. Poe wrote in English, but was he really as American as Hawthorne and Emerson were American? His verse and prose depict characters and landscapes that belong to No Man's Land, in that mystic region east of the sun, west of the moon. The American scene was unsympathetic to him, and he refused to become even morally acclimated. His Eldorado is "over the mountains of the moon, down the valley of the shadow." His creations are bodiless; shadow of shadows, the incarnation of Silence, set forth in spectral speech. Unlike any other native-born writer, he sounds better in a French garb; the Baudelaire translations improve his style, and Stéphane Mallarmé has accomplished an almost miraculous transposition of "Ulalume." ("The Raven"—"Le Corbeau"—by the same master I do not care for as much, and its refrain, "Jamais plus!" is not so musically sonorous as "Nevermore!")

Henry Beyle-Stendhal wrote in his witty, malicious manner that "Romanticism is the art of presenting to the people literary works which in the actual state of their habitudes and beliefs are capable of giving the greatest possible pleasure; Classicism, on the contrary, is the art of presenting literature which gave the greatest possible pleasure to their great-grandfathers." Stendhal is half right. A Classic is sometimes a dead Romantic. But Poe and Chopin remain invincibly Romantic, yet are Classics. Chopin is more human than Poe, inasmuch as he is patriotic. His polonaises are "cannons buried in flowers," his psychic bravery overflows in the Revolutionary Étude. He is Chopin. And he is also Poland. Like the national poet, Adam Mickiewicz, he struck many human chords, though some of his melodies could dwell in Poe's "misty mid-region of Weir," where Beauty boasts an icy reign. There is a disturbing dissonance in the Poe-Chopin case: Poe was a man without a country; Chopin had the priceless possession of Poland. On his heart was engraved "Poland." The love of Frederic Chopin for his native land dowered him with a profounder nature than the Lucifer of American poetry, Edgar Allan Poe. But what enigmatic, beautiful souls!

James Gibbons Huneker

William Allen White (1868—)

MARY WHITE

The Associated Press reports carrying the news of Mary White's death declared that it came as the result of a fall from a horse. How she would have hooted at that! She never fell from a horse in her life. Horses have fallen on her and with her—"I'm always trying to hold 'em in my lap," she used to say. But she was proud of few things, and one was that she could ride anything that had four legs and hair. Her death resulted not from a fall, but from a blow on the head which fractured her skull, and the blow came from the limb of an overhanging tree on the parking.

The last hour of her life was typical of its happiness. She came home from a day's work at school, topped off by a hard grind with the copy on the High School Annual, and felt that a ride would refresh her. She climbed into her khakis, chattering to her mother about the work she was doing, and hurried to get her horse and be out on the dirt roads for the country air and the radiant green fields of the spring. As she rode through the town on an easy gallop she kept waving at passers-by. She knew everyone in town. For a decade the little figure with the long pigtail and the red hair-ribbon has been familiar on the streets of Emporia, and she got in the way of speaking to those who nodded at her. She passed the Kerrs, walking the horse, in front of the Normal Library, and waved at them; passed another friend a few hundred feet farther on, and waved at her. The horse was walking, and as she turned into North Merchant Street she took off her cowboy hat, and the horse swung into a lope. She passed the Tripletts and waved her cowboy hat at them, still moving gaily north on Merchant Street. A *Gazette* carrier passed—a High School boy friend—and she waved at him, but with her bridle hand; the horse veered quickly, plunged into the parking where the low-hanging limb faced her, and, while she still looked back waving, the blow came. But she did not fall from the horse; she slipped off, dazed a bit, staggered and fell in a faint. She never quite recovered consciousness.

But she did not fall from the horse, neither was she riding fast. A year or so ago she used to go like the wind. But that habit was broken, and she used the horse to get into the open to get fresh, hard exercise, and to work off a certain surplus energy that welled up in her and needed a physical outlet. That need has been in her heart for years. It was back of the impulse that kept the dauntless little brown-clad figure on the streets and country roads of this community and built into a strong, muscular body what had been a frail and sickly frame during the first years of her life. But the riding gave her more than a body. It released a gay and hardy soul. She was the happiest thing in the world. And she was happy because she was enlarging her horizon. She came to know all sorts and conditions of men; Charley O'Brien, the traffic cop, was one of her best friends. W. L. Holtz, the Latin teacher, was another. Tom O'Connor, farmer-politician, and Rev. J. H. J. Rice, preacher and police judge, and Frank Beach, music master, were her special friends, and all the girls, black and white, above the track and below the track, in Pepville and Stringtown, were among her acquaintances. And she brought home riotous stories of her adventures. She loved to rollick; persiflage was her natural expression at home. Her humor was a continual bubble of joy. She seemed to think in hyperbole and metaphor. She was mischievous without malice, as full of faults as an old shoe. No angel was Mary White, but an easy girl to live with, for she never nursed a grouch five minutes in her life.

With all her eagerness for the out-of-doors, she loved books. On her table when she left her room were a book by Conrad, one by Galsworthy, "Creative Chemistry" by E. E. Slosson, and a Kipling book. She read Mark Twain, Dickens, and Kipling before she was ten—all of their writings. Wells and Arnold Bennett particularly amused and diverted her. She was entered as a student in Wellesley in 1922; was assistant editor of the High School Annual this year, and in line for election to the editorship of the Annual next year. She was a member of the executive committee of the High School Y. W. C. A.

Within the last two years she had begun to be moved by an ambition to draw. She began as most children do by scribbling, in her school books, funny pictures. She bought cartoon magazines and took a course—rather casually, naturally, for she was, after all, a child with no strong purposes—and this year she tasted the first fruits of success by having her pictures accepted by the High School Annual. But the thrill of delight she got when Mr. Ecord, of the Normal Annual, asked her to do the cartooning for that book this spring, was too beautiful for words. She fell to her work with all her enthusiastic heart. Her drawings were accepted, and her pride—always repressed by a lively sense of the ridiculousness of the figure she was cutting—was a really gorgeous thing to see. No successful artist ever drank a deeper draught of satisfaction than she took from the little fame her work was getting among her schoolfellows. In her glory, she almost forgot her horse—but never her car.

For she used the car as a jitney bus. It was her social life. She never had a "party" in all her nearly seventeen years—wouldn't have one; but she never drove a block in the car in her life that she didn't begin to fill the car with pick-ups! Everybody rode with Mary White—white and black, old and young, rich and poor, men and women. She liked nothing better than to fill the car full of long-legged High School boys and an occasional girl, and parade the town. She never had a "date," nor went to a dance, except once with her brother, Bill, and the "boy proposition" didn't interest her—yet. But young people—great spring-breaking, varnish-cracking, fender-bending, door-sagging carloads of "kids" gave her great pleasure. Her zests were keen. But the most fun she ever had in her life was acting as chairman of the committee that got up the big turkey dinner for the poor folks at the county home; scores of pies, gallons of slaw; jam, cakes, preserves, oranges, and a wilderness of turkey were loaded in the car and taken to the county home. And, being of a practical turn of mind, she risked her own Christmas dinner by staying to see that the poor folks actually got it all. Not that she was a cynic; she just disliked to tempt folks. While there, she found a blind colored uncle, very old, who could do nothing but make rag rugs, and she rustled up from her school friends rags enough to keep him busy for a season. The last engagement she tried to make was to take the guests at the county home out for a car ride. And the last endeavor of her life was to try to get a rest room for colored girls in the High School. She found one girl reading in the toilet, because there was no better place for a colored girl to loaf, and it inflamed her sense of injustice and she became a nagging harpie to those who, she thought, could remedy the evil. The poor she had always with her, and was glad of it. She hungered and thirsted for righteousness; and was the most impious creature in the world. She joined the Congregational Church without consulting her parents; not particularly for her soul's good. She never had a thrill of piety in her life, and would have hooted at a "testimony." But even as a little child she felt the church was an agency for helping people to more of life's abundance, and she wanted to help. She never wanted help for herself. Clothes meant little to her. It was a fight to get a new rig on her; but eventually a harder fight to get it off. She never wore a jewel and had no ring but her High School class ring, and never asked for anything but a wrist watch. She refused to have her hair up; though she was nearly seventeen. "Mother," she protested, "you don't know how much I get by with, in my braided pigtails, that I could not with my hair up." Above every other passion of her life was her passion not to grow up, to be a child. The tomboy in her, which was big, seemed to loathe to be put away forever in skirts. She was Peter Pan, who refused to grow up.

Her funeral yesterday at the Congregational Church was as she would have wished it; no singing, no flowers save the big bunch of roses from her Brother Bill's Harvard classmen—Heavens, how proud that would have made her! and the red roses from the *Gazette* force—in vases at her head and feet. A short prayer, Paul's beautiful essay on "Love" from the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians, some remarks about her democratic spirit by her friend, John H. J. Rice, pastor and police judge, which she would have deprecated if she could, a prayer sent down for her by her friend, Carl Nau, and opening the service the slow, poignant movement from Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, which she loved, and closing the service a cutting from the joyously melancholy first movement of Tschaikoswki's Pathetic Symphony, which she liked to hear in certain moods on the phonograph; then the Lord's Prayer by her friends in the High School.

That was all.

For her pallbearers only her friends were chosen; her Latin teacher, W. L. Holtz; her High School principal, Rice Brown; her doctor, Frank Foncannon; her friend, W. W. Finney; her pal at the *Gazette* office, Walter Hughes; and her brother Bill. It would have made her smile to know that her friend, Charley O'Brien, the traffic cop, had been transferred from Sixth and Commercial to the corner near the church to direct her friends who came to bid her good-by.

William Allen White

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Booth Tarkington (1869—)

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE GREAT ADVENTURE

At the dinner table, the other evening, one of the ladies announced her hearty approval of the new morals for young people. We had been wondering if it could be really true that the modern young people are as "wild" as we so often hear they are; and this lady, who has a daughter of marriageable age, said she thought they were. She thought they were even wilder than we had heard.

"What's more," she said, "I'm heartily in favor of it. In the old days, when we were young, the boys had all the fun. They went on larks and enjoyed themselves just exactly as they chose, and the poor girls not only had to refrain from larks themselves but had to appear shocked if they heard about the jamborees the boys had been on. Nowadays, what's fair for one sex is considered fair for the other. Our own generation is greatly scandalized by all these stories it hears of 'wild girls'; but what's the actual truth of the matter? Simply this: Our old-fashioned hypocrisy has been swept away and a lot of unfairness with it. My daughter has just as much right to a good time as her brother has. Of course I hope they'll both be rather moderate about it."

Apparently what this lady said was accepted by the other members of the party as reasonable; but later in the evening, as I sat by the library fire with my old friend the Doctor I asked him what he thought of it. He is sixty-seven years old and has seen many "modern views" come and go—views upon young people and old people, views upon right and wrong, and views upon life and death. He had said nothing when the lady set forth her opinion upon the modern young people, and he began his reply to my question by explaining why he hadn't spoken.

"It might have started an argument," he said; "and of course arguments only confirm people in their own opinions. Her statement reflects a view that is rather fashionable just now. In substance it's this: 'Since the boys enjoy the dissipation and sensual pleasures of life, why shouldn't the girls?' Well, that's not new. It's only another way of saying, 'What's sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose'; and it's founded on a belief in the wisdom of a much more ancient saying than that — one you'll find pretty generally prevailing throughout history during periods of prosperity, and sometimes, too, during periods of pestilence."

"What saying is that?" I asked him.

"It's the most desperate of all the sayings that have come down to us," the Doctor answered. "It's the expression of civilized man's most ancient despair; yet we've just heard it from the lips of a twentieth-century lady who is much in fashion. It's man's confession that his life seems to him but a moment of consciousness between two eternities of black nothing. 'Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die!' Wasn't that what she *really* said?"

"Yes, I suppose so," I said. "Are we in the midst of a revival of that ancient desperation? Is it the 'modern spirit'?"

"I shouldn't go so far as to call it that," he answered; "and yet I believe there are more people seeking mere pleasure nowadays — every sort of mere pleasure — than at any previous time in the world's history."

"Yes," I agreed. "But at the same time I believe that more people are seeking light upon the great question than ever sought it before."

"What great question?"

"Well, it might be put in the terms of the ancient saying," I suggested. " 'Why *shouldn't* we eat, drink, and be merry, since tomorrow we die?' In other words, multitudes of people ask for confirmation of the old religious faiths, because they can no longer accept the faiths unless they find the confirmation. Science has slowly increased agnosticism, until now there is great bewilderment. The churches feel it, and seek to offer us the confirmation by altering the letter of the faith. That satisfies the objections of some people to the old letter of the faith, no doubt; yet the confirmation remains as lacking as before.

"The lady at the dinner table was typical of the many who have come to the conclusion that no confirmation is possible. 'There's nothing for all of us to do, except to go on whatever larks we can,' she virtually said.

"Well, what's the answer, Doctor? You're sixty-seven; you've seen a great deal, and you've thought a great deal. Have you any confirmations to offer, yourself?"

He laughed musingly. "I have my own for myself," he said. "Yet it has always seemed to me that confirmations were pretty obviously to hand for people of open mind. The open mind is the first necessity, of course. 'There ain't no sech a animal' as a hippopotamus for the old woman who disbelieves in hippopotamuses, even if she's looking right *at* one of 'em! You asked, 'Why shouldn't we eat, drink, and be merry, since tomorrow we die?' Well, the easiest answer is another question: But suppose you *don't* die? And the confirmation the world is seeking is confirmation of the ancient but shaken faith in that supposition. Man wants to know if he has eternal life and if there is God. If he finds an affirmative answer to either question, he'll accept it as the answer to both. If he finds that death is merely a change in continuous life he'll know there is God. Isn't it curious that in the beginning man knew perfectly well that death was only a change in life, and not extinction of himself at all?"

"In the beginning?" I asked. "You don't mean the Book of Genesis, do you, Doctor?"

"No," he said. "I mean man before he is civilized, man before he is even barbaric. I mean the savage. The savage doesn't think about it; he simply *knows* that he doesn't die when his body dies. It's only after man begins to try to think the whole thing out with his little mind that he begins to doubt. He tries to get a complete plan of the universe inside a seven-and-a-quarter-size hat, and the misfit makes him desperate. So he decides to eat, drink, and be merry, because his misfit thinking is too much for him. But about what savages know, I'd like to tell you a story, if you don't mind."

"Go ahead," I said.

"A good many years ago I had a friend who went up the Congo with Henry M. Stanley," he said. "After while, my friend was left in charge of a section of raw jungle with a few native villages in it along the river. He was the one white man in several hundred square miles, and he had to be diplomatic. Of course he couldn't interfere with any of the native customs; and so, when the chief of the village he was living in died, and preparations were made to burn a number of the dead man's wives and slaves, as part of the funeral ceremonies, my friend had no way to prevent it. Naturally, he was badly upset over such a horrible thing; but he was entirely powerless. He told me that he wanted to go away, where he couldn't see them making the pyres ready; but he couldn't—an unpleasant fascination kept him hanging about, looking on.

"Just before sunset they brought the victims out and lashed them down upon the piles of brushwood, and still my friend couldn't break the spell and get away. There was one man he was particularly sorry about—the old chief's head slave—and the torch was applied to his pyre first. That started the white man for the jungle; but to save his life he couldn't keep from looking back as he went.

"The smoke was drifting from the pyres, and the little crackling flames were beginning to grow longer, rising upward. Then my friend saw a singular thing: The new chief, who was the dead chief's nephew, leaned down over the principal slave, and whispered in his ear. This was the last the white man saw of the fearful business; he went into the jungle, as far from the noises and the terrible smell of that smoke as he could get, and he spent the night there, pretty sick.

"Next day he came back to his hut in the village, and he told me the thing he couldn't get out of his mind was the new chief's whispering in the ear of the old chief's head slave after the flames had already begun to scorch the poor fellow. What on earth could the chief have wanted to say to a man who would be dead within five minutes? What *use* could there be in saying anything to a man who was virtually extinct already?

"Well, he told me the thing puzzled him so that he finally went to the new chief and asked him about it. He said, 'Would you mind telling me what it was you said to your dead uncle's head slave after they'd lighted the fire under him?'

" 'It wasn't important,' the new chief answered. 'I just told him to tell my uncle that the war canoe he left me was rotten.' "

The Doctor concluded this little narrative with a wave of the hand that left it to me to make my own inferences; so I followed the suggestion of his gesture. "I see. The slave was going to meet the dead man within the next few minutes, so he was a proper message bearer. Or at least the savage who sent that message thought so."

"He didn't think it," the Doctor said. "He knew it. He knew it as well as any man can know anything. He knew it natively, so to speak, and without reasoning or arguing or thinking about it at all. Savages accept personal survival of death as a fact as simply obvious as the fact of life itself. Of course that's why they send along some of the wives and slaves of a dead man to go with him, just as they bury his weapons with him, and put food and water near his grave for him.

"They don't evolve a theory of personal survival, they simply are conscious that they will themselves survive; and deep within us all that same consciousness is buried among our other buried consciousnesses, that perhaps we inherit from our savage ancestors. Plato was aware of such a consciousness of his own, and his wasn't buried. He said he didn't know whether other people were immortal or not; but he knew he was, himself."

"But Plato wasn't an ordinary man," I suggested. "If the rest of us do possess this buried consciousness, as you say, I'm afraid we'd find it pretty hard to dig up. Besides, I've heard it explained as rising from the savage's seeing himself in dreams. He concludes he must be two persons: the one he sees in dreams, his soul; and himself, his body. At least that was the explanation."

The Doctor shook his head. "No, it wasn't an explanation, because it doesn't explain; it was only an attempt to find another way round the bush. The other self, seen in dreams, is possibly the result of consciousness of an unbodily self that actually exists. But I admit that our buried knowledge of our own survival would be difficult for most of us to bring to the surface. What that old consciousness amounts to now in our civilization is something the skeptics and agnostics and materialists would likely enough call a tradition. Men used to believe they had souls—spiritual parts that survived death; but this belief and all of their other beliefs have given way wherever they have not been confirmed by science and reason. So the agnostics would say, wouldn't they?"

"Yes," I said. "That's what I've been saying, myself. We're looking for confirmation."

"Then let's try the confirmation of reason," the Doctor suggested. "Let's see if it fails us. Other confirmations are possible, of course, and thousands of excellent minds accept the 'psychic' one of the 'spiritualists.' They may be right, for all I know; but, so far in this matter, we can only fall back on our individual experiences; and mine hasn't been convincing. I've seen and heard some inexplicable things, and so have most people who have been at all persistent in seeking light after this fashion of seeking it; but I have had no proof that I ever communicated with dead people—no proof that a careful lawyer would accept, I mean. So, for the confirmation we seek, I found long ago that I had to fall back on my reason. I, too, am not Plato."

"Did you find the confirmation there, Doctor—in your reason?"

"Let's see if you'll think so," he said. "Let me ask first, if there seems to be anything about me that will not perish if my body perishes. Well, that's simple enough to answer, because we know that the life that is in my body now isn't going to perish, but will only pass into other forms. Leave my body upon the hillside and its life will make a richer blossoming there; none of the life is lost. As for the rest of me, we accept it as true that nothing of me that is matter can be annihilated.

"Now, if you are a materialist, you believe that all of me is force or matter; so therefore, since force or matter cannot perish, but only changes, you must believe that all of me is imperishable. That is to say, you may disperse me, but you cannot annihilate me. When I die I only change into other forms. A little water from the ocean has become a raindrop for a moment, then returns into the bosom of the sea. It no longer has a separate existence, but you cannot deny that every bit of it still has existence. Everybody is willing to admit so much, I take it."

"Yes," I said. "Probably not many people will quarrel with you there, Doctor."

"Very well," he returned. "Then we must take a curious position. Since the material part of a man is imperishable, then, if he has a perishable part, it must be a part of him that is not matter. Therefore, if he has a spirit, and if any part of him perishes, that part must be the spirit. So you see where the materialist comes out. He must admit that his body is immortal, and that the life in it is immortal; but that his soul, if he have one, may be finite. I said just now that this was a curious position to be driven into, but it's more than curious. If you'll think of it for a minute or so I think you'll agree with me that it's ridiculous."

"Wait a moment, Doctor," I said. "The materialist won't admit, of course, that he may have a soul—a spirit, that is to say, apart from matter."

"Good enough," said the Doctor. "If the materialist won't admit that he may have a soul apart from matter, then he must admit that he may have one that is not apart from matter; and if he admits this, he has admitted, according to his own definitions, that possibly he has an immortal soul. Altogether, I should think the logic of materialism about as unreasonable and unsatisfactory as the foggiest mysteries of mysticism. Of course the literal fact is that the materialist believes he hasn't anything in the nature of what people think of as the soul, except his brain. He believes that when he dies, his brain and he, himself, simultaneously cease to exist, because his brain is himself. Have you ever seen a brain in a jar of alcohol?"

"Yes," I said. "Why?"

"Because," the Doctor answered, "if you have, and can believe that such a thing produced wireless and the Taj Mahal and Gray's Elegy, I want to take another look at your eyes!"

"You want to take another look at them in order to see if my brain is affected, do you, Doctor?" I asked, and when he promptly replied, "Yes, I do," I thought he had fallen into my trap. "We don't think well, then, when our brains are affected, do we?" I said. "Gray couldn't have written the 'Elegy' if his brain had been damaged, could he?"

"No," the Doctor answered. "No more than Paganini could have made music with a broken violin. But Paganini with a broken violin in his hands would still have been a musician. The violin doesn't make the music, does it? Go a step further back into Paganini, and ask how it was that he became a great violinist. Because his hands could do the necessary fingering? No; he had to train his fingers. That is, his fingers had to be controlled and made to do their work by his brain. 'There we have it!' says the materialist. 'It was his *brain* that did the real work!' No; that can't be, because he had to train his brain too. He had to make it learn a great many things, acquire a great many things, before he became a finished musician. *Who* had to make his brain do all this? Paganini did. Then there was a *person* behind his brain, was there?"

"There may have been," I said. "But a number of people would say that heredity did it, and that what made him train his brain, or a part of his brain, was merely a hereditary pressure or activity in another part of that same brain."

"Whose brain?"

"Paganini's," I answered.

"Then Paganini owned a brain, and an activity in one part of it trained another part of it in music?"

"No," I said. "Of course, if I admit that Paganini 'owned a brain' the materialist's case is lost, because I'd have to admit the existence of the owner—a person or identity behind the brain. The materialist's answer is that there was no such owner. There was no Paganini except the brain. One part of it had a hereditary impulse, and trained another part of it in music."

"Very well," the Doctor said. "What was the origin of that hereditary impulse?"

"Some remote ancestor of Paganini's evidently had a special turn for music."

"All right. Where'd he get his 'special turn'?"

"From a remoter ancestor."

"All right again," said the Doctor. "Let's go back to the first of Paganini's ancestors who had a gift for music. How did he get his talent?"

"It couldn't have been a talent originally. The first of Paganini's ancestors who inclined to music did so because of environment, or accident, perhaps. He may have come into possession of a fine reed pipe, or perhaps he lost a leg, and had to make his living playing on a harp."

"Let's suppose he lost a leg," said the Doctor. "And that he saw no way to make his living except by playing the harp, for which he had no talent. One part of his brain evidently had to say to another part, 'Here, you've got to learn to play the harp.' Well, what made the directing part of his brain *able* to say such a thing? It didn't have any hereditary musical activity, so how could it put forth such a command?"

"It was able to draw conclusions," I said. "It had the power of reason."

"Where did it get that?"

"Inherited it," I said.

"All right; that puts us back where we started. Paganini was musical because he inherited an activity in one part of his brain from a first musical ancestor, who was musical because of a hereditary activity in one part of *his* brain that made him able to draw conclusions. Let's go back to the first ancestor who could draw conclusions. Now, since this one couldn't have any such hereditary activity, where did his brain get that power?"

"I don't know," I said. Nobody knows."

"Pure mystery, is it?" the Doctor inquired.

"It seems to be, so far," I admitted. "I could say, of course, that Paganini's first reasoning ancestor evolved the power to reason out of the pressure of environment, but that would only throw us back to the beginnings of evolution and the original life cell; and the mystery would confront us there just the same."

"Which is the same as saying that materialism is as much founded on mystery as any other theory. That is, materialism is just as much mysticism as mysticism is itself, isn't it?"

"Certainly."

"All right," the Doctor said. "Then the materialist is a person who has a choice of guesses. He looks at a brain in a jar of alcohol, and he arbitrarily decides to believe that there, actually before him, minus the stimulant of blood circulation, is a real self of St. Paul or Isaac Newton or Abraham Lincoln. '*It* thinks,' he says; not, '*He* thinks.'

"Some of the ancients believed that the kidneys were the seat of the mind; others thought its seat was the liver; but even they believed that the liver and kidneys were only the *seat* of the mind—they didn't believe that the liver and kidneys were the *people!* They never confused Socrates or Alexander or Charlemagne with viscera.

"Well, experimental science has discovered that the brain is more vitally the seat of thinking than is any other part of the body. You can change an ordinary man's way of thinking by doing various things to any other part of his body, of course; but the brain is the vital center of the whole nervous instrument, and that is all we know about it. My brain is a part of my possessions, in the sense that my liver is a part of my possessions; and I admit that, if either is damaged, I shall be in great difficulties to go about my work; but neither of them, nor any part of my body, is *myself*."

"And yet," I said, "if a part of your brain is altered a very little bit your whole nature will be changed."

"My expression of my nature will be changed," he answered. "But I shall still be myself. Let's go back to our useful Paganini. Change the tensity of one string upon his fiddle, and his music will become discordant. Suppose you loosen all the strings and twist the violin, while he is compelled to go on playing until his instrument is irreparably damaged, just as I might be compelled to go on living in a damaged condition until my brain and body were finally wrecked.

"He would be the same Paganini, and the music he *wanted* to produce would be the same, though the sounds would be mad. And if you'd heard Paganini play under such conditions you'd have called him mad, though the angel of music that dwelt in him was an angel none the less. He was not his fiddle, and destroying his fiddle would not destroy Paganini. I am not my brain, and destroying my brain will not destroy me."

"I hope not," I said. "But couldn't an agnostic charge you with reasoning too much by means of analogy?"

The Doctor laughed. "I dare say; but I'd retort by defining an agnostic as a man who refuses to reason by any means at all. He accepts only what he *knows*; and, as he knows nothing, his acceptance is naturally rather limited. Well, let's admit that none of us *knows* anything worth knowing, neither the mystic, the agnostic, nor the materialist.

"Man on this earth is like a boy being educated; he can get only what knowledge he is able to comprehend; but if you'll look at man historically you'll see that he is granted the opportunity to learn as fast as he *can* comprehend. His professors know algebra; but they can't explain algebra to him until he has mastered some arithmetic; as soon as he's *ready* for algebra they begin to explain it to him.

"To my mind the most significant fact in man's development is that he does actually receive knowledge in exactly the same manner that a schoolboy receives it. We sometimes speak of 'attaining to knowledge'; but to me knowledge appears to be received through the attainment of ability to comprehend it. For instance, let's consider our knowledge of how to fly. In my own young days a person who believed flying possible for men was considered a foolish visionary. We'd just got accustomed to regarding railroads and the telegraph as about the topping achievements of the human mind, and it wasn't thought possible to go much further.

"Of course everybody *wished* that men could fly, and yet, except a few cranks, everybody said that men could never fly. Some said we 'weren't intended to'; others said it was 'scientifically impossible'—inventors who worked on models of flying machines were thought crazy; and people who believed in the possibility of flying were derided. Indeed, a man who 'believed in flying' was about on the plane with the man who believed in ghosts. I don't think, though, that the experimenters in flying were considered nearly so respectable as the ghost hunters of psychic research are considered today. And yet all the while there existed the possibility that men would fly. Possibility? No; the *certainty*. That certainty was in existence, as it had always been in existence, waiting for man to discover it and use it. It was merely waiting for him to know enough to be *ready* for it.

"For thousands of years men had been longing to fly, to know the freedom of the upper air; their longing had been a real one, a genuine great hope; and yet they laughed at themselves as fools for having it. It was the idlest of dreams; and dreams were for poets, not for practical people. Other great hopes had attained their fulfillment; but this one was too impractical—too mystic! So that when it actually came to fruition and the Wrights were in the air, day after day, many people were still incredulous.

"When the stupendous sight of men flying in the sky was offered to the farmers near Dayton, why were most people still reluctant to believe that this great hope had been fulfilled, and that the dream of men for thousands of years had come true? It seems strange now that everyone hadn't seen that it was *certain* to come true, for, as I said, we know now that it was a certainty. But why didn't we know *then* that it was?

"Well, there's an answer, and it fits in with our inability to know anything that we can't comprehend. In other words, we won't believe anything unless we know the 'how' of it, or unless somebody in whom we have confidence makes us believe that *he* knows the 'how' of it. As soon as we heard that the Wrights had fitted a little gas engine to a kind of box kite, we said, 'Oh, yes, I guess it must be true, because *that* way they *could* fly.' But ten minutes earlier we'd hardly believed a word of it.

"Yes, man is a schoolboy, going to school; and, like a schoolboy, he is pretty sure that he knows what he knows. For instance, he used to know that the earth was flat. Well, there came to be a great deal of pother about that, in the course of time. Accepted science ruled that the earth was flat, and everybody, except a few queer people and mystics, knew it was flat. The materialists won't accept any statement that can't be backed up by the five senses, or by mathematics based upon the senses, and the earth was flat to the five senses: you could *see* that it was flat. Were you going to believe a theorizing mystic who asked you to credit something directly opposed to the evidence of your very eyesight?

"Earlier in man's history he beheld the sun in the heavens, and every material evidence proved to him that the sun was his god. When the sun was kindly, man's crops bore plentifully. Man was happy in his god's friendly beaming. But when the god was angry and veiled his face in black, misfortune fell upon man. There in the sky was visibly the direct cause of his weal or woe. How could anybody deny that the sun must be the god of man and the earth? Mystics said, 'No. The sun is not more a conscious person than is any other fire. There *is* a god, true; but the sun is only the true god's instrument.' So the people burned those mystics for their impiety in insulting the visible god. Mystics have always been offensive to practical persons who can believe only in what they already believe, and already believe nothing not perceptible through the five senses. Isn't it queer, then, that ever since the world began the practical-five-senses-materialist people have been wrong on every question relating to the nature of man, of matter, and of the universe?"

"Have they?" I asked. "I didn't know they'd been wrong *every* time?"

"They have, though," the Doctor said genially. "Every single time. They believed that the sun was God, and kept on believing it until they couldn't burn all the mystics who believed otherwise. They believed that the sun was God; they believed that the earth was flat; they believed that it was impossible for men to fly; they believed that the liver was the seat of consciousness; and they believe now that Thomas Edison is a few pounds of tremulous meat that you can put into a glass jar. They believe that my brain is myself, and that I have no existence, or hope of existence, except as my brain keeps physical life in it. Well, since they have been wrong in their beliefs upon all such matters during several thousand years, I am not so eccentric as to think that they could possibly be right—for the first and only time—upon this question, the most important of all."

"Then who is right?" I asked. "And what is right, Doctor?"

"Let's see what our question is, definitely," he said. "Since the life in us lives on, and since nothing is destroyed, the question must be this: Have I a 'spiritual essence,' an identity and consciousness that is not my brain and body? If I have, then it would survive the dispersal of the body and the movement of the body's life into other forms. Now, in answer to this question we have the brain worshipers on one side, saying 'No'; the agnostics in the middle, sturdily insisting upon their ignorance; and the mystics on the other side, answering 'Yes.'

"We have just spoken of those who say 'No.' They have always said 'No,' and they have always been wrong. Who are the mystics, those who say 'Yes'? They are the savages, the intuitive, recent sprouts out of nature, carrying with them up from nature the consciousness of perpetuity—the sense of personal survival that made the new chief give the scorching slave a message for the old chief who was dead. Those who say 'Yes' are the spiritualists, and that increasing number of scientists whose study of psychic phenomena has convinced them of the fact of personal survival. Those who say 'Yes' are the prophets of all the great religions, with their priests and followers who died in the faith or live in it now—all those myriads of millions of people who have accepted any of the great religions or accept one now. Those who say 'Yes' are those who, like Plato, know that they do not consist wholly of brain cells. Finally, those who say 'Yes' are those who have perceived order and system and direction in the universe."

"You mean that since there *is* system — which no thoughtful or educated person can well deny, if he knows anything about the 'orderly processions of the stars,' for instance—then the existence of the system can have but one explanation?"

"Yes," said the Doctor. "Especially a system that presents such features as the one we were talking about a while ago. I mean the feature of the system—of the great Plan—that grants man knowledge when he is fit to use it and makes himself ready to comprehend it. Is that a *coincidence*, do you think? No; not more a coincidence than the stars completing their stupefying orbits with regularity and precision.

"Well, where there is system and plan and design there cannot be chance, there must be the Designer. So we who have perceived the Design as the intentional work of the Designer—and I see no option to perceive anything else—we are sure that the hope of survival implanted in all these billions of the Designer's human creatures must be a part of the Design, and an intuition of a part of it. That hope would not have been so universal were there no meaning in it—not in a *Design*. The hope of flying was a small and sequestered hope compared to *this* hope, yet it was fulfilled,—when the time came. So shall we all know that we survive when the time comes to know it. The Designer does not waste the hopes of man. He gave them to man to use. You see I don't agree with the lady on any point at all."

"What lady?" I asked, for I had forgotten.

"The lady at the dinner table," the Doctor said, as he rose to go. "I don't think 'Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die' a safe motto. Suppose eating and drinking and being merry now might be harmful to you after you die! Very likely they are, if you overdo them."

"What motto would you suggest as a substitute?" I asked.

He had gone to the door, but he paused in thought; then he said, "There isn't any motto that can take the place of that old pagan bit of despair. It will last a while longer, and then it will go into the waste basket as a piece of incomprehensible and obsolete nonsense."

"When will that be, Doctor?"

"It might be next year or next century," he said. "The knowledge may come at any time, and all men quickly accept it as established. *I* don't know when it will be." He laughed then, as he went out. "You see, *I didn't* know when men were going to fly, either," he said. "Yet that was a certainty too."

And after he bade me good night I heard him confirming this to himself as he departed from the outer door.

"Yes, we learned how to fly—when the *time* came."

As for me, I went back to the fireside, and presently found myself thinking of a skull I had seen once in Italy, the skull of a saint, I was told by the people who had charge of it. And now, remembering what the Doctor said of great men's brains in alcohol, I was doubtful that the skull had ever contained the saint himself. He was in Paradise, they told me; and, however that may be, I am constrained to believe that he must be somewhere. Since every part of him must necessarily still be in existence, so must he, himself, be equally alive and immortal. He, himself, was certainly the most important part of him; the other parts were subordinate and served no purpose except as temporary and changeable possessions of his. To believe the inferior parts invested with immortality and the most important part perishable seemed to me like believing that a man's trousers, and not the legs within them, possess the life and do the walking.

This is a view I cannot accept—that trousers do the walking—nor can I believe that the saint whose skull I saw is now principally sap in the eucalyptus tree growing beside his grave. Let people who *can* believe such things believe them. For my part, I am too great a skeptic.

Booth Tarkington

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Conrad Aiken (1889—)

POETIC REALISM: MASTERS AND SANDBURG

It is one of the anomalies of the present poetic revival in this country that it is not dominated by any one single group or tendency, but shared in and fought for by many: classicists, romanticists, and realists, of varying degrees of radicalism, all exist simultaneously, so that we have a spectacle to which perhaps no era was ever before treated—a complete cycle of poetic evolution presented not in the usual span of two centuries, more or less, but in the space of two years. Those who are interested in poetry are today permitted to watch a three-ringed circus, and to distribute their applause as they please; with a fair certainty that they will find something worth applauding. The rivalry is keen. Nobody will hazard a guess as to which ring will dominate the circus. But so long as the competitors are goaded on by the feats of their rivals to new and more astonishing acrobatics, it does not so much matter. . . . .

Mr. Masters is a welcome, though perplexing, figure in contemporary American poetry. Welcome, because along with Mr. Frost, and perhaps Mr. Robinson and Mr. Sandburg, he is a realist, and because a vigorous strain of realism is so profoundly needed in our literature today—as indeed it has always been needed. Perplexing, because his relative importance, as posterity will see it, is so extraordinarily difficult to gauge. Of his welcome there can be no question. There has been a disposition among poets and critics of poetry during the last three years to assume that the most important changes, or revolutions, taking place in American poetry at present are those that regard form. The Imagists and other free-verse writers have found their encomiasts, and to them the renewed vitality of American poetry has in consequence been a little too freely ascribed. No one will deny that the current changes in poetic form—

the earlier blind revolt, the later effort to mint new forms which shall be organic — have their value. But we should not forget that of equal and possibly greater importance has been the attempt of our realists to alter not merely the form of poetry but also its content. What Mr. Masefield and Mr. Gibson did in England, it remained for Mr. Masters and Mr. Frost to do in America. The influence of *Spoon River Anthology* and *North of Boston* can hardly yet be estimated. That the Imagists did not share in this influence was perhaps merely an accident. There was nothing in the Imagist platform to prevent it. It simply happened that the Imagists were without exception lyric poets, or more specifically, poets in the decorative or coloristic tradition. While they were still experimenting with new rhythms as the vehicle of expression for a gamut of perceptions and sensations which differed from the traditional perceptions and sensations of poetry only by being a trifle subtler and more objective, Mr. Masters and Mr. Frost, without so much as a preliminary blast of the trumpet, suddenly incorporated into their poetry a new world — the world of the individual consciousness in its complex entirety. At the moment, this was a new conception of the nature of poetry. A poem was not to be a single jewel of colorful phrases, but the jewel in its matrix. Of such poetry, it is readily seen, the appeal would be not merely esthetic, but intellectual and emotional also — in the richest sense, human. The distinction between the poetic and the non-poetic vocabulary was broken down, a condition which has obtained conspicuously only in two preceding poetic eras, the Chaucerian and Elizabethan. The opportunity for a transfusion of vitality from our tremendously increased prose vocabulary to the comparatively small and static poetic vocabulary was unparalleled. New developments of form were involved, perhaps, but while the immediate effects of these were more obvious, it is to be questioned whether they were as far-reaching. It is safe to say that no poet now writing in this country has escaped this influence. In its healthily acrid presence it has been increasingly difficult for the prettifiers, the airy treaders of preciosity, the disciples of sweetness and sentiment, to go their mincing ways. Most of them have felt a compulsion either to change tone or to be silent.

In view of the importance of this influence, therefore, it is interesting to speculate on the nature and function of realistic poetry; and the work of Mr. Masters furnishes an excellent opportunity. To say that such work as this delights us, at its best, because it is human, is after all somewhat superficial. In a broad sense, even the most treble of dawn-twitterers is human. But clearly the pleasure it affords us is a different sort of pleasure from that afforded, say, by a lyric of Becquer or Shelley. It has, when it is good, a clearly recognizable magic; but this magic is not quite of the same character as that we associate with "Kubla Khan" or "The Ode to a Grecian Urn." Matthew Arnold in his essay on poetry was apparently insensible to this distinction, for at least one of his famous touchstone lines belongs rather to the realistic than to the lyric category of magic. The line of Wordsworth, "And never lifted up a single stone," certainly does not appeal, in any clear way, to the sense of beauty; its felicity is of a different sort. What precisely constitutes this second sort of verbal magic is in the present state of psychology perhaps impossible to analyze. At most we can perceive certain relations and distinctions. On one plane, the mechanism of the two is identical: both depend for their effect on the choice of so sharply characteristic a single detail that a powerful motor reaction will ensue and complete the sensory pattern in its entirety. This is known as Pavlov's law. But here begins the divergence, for while this might explain the quality of *vividness* which is common to both, it appears to have no bearing on the fact that each sort of vividness affects the reader in a specifically different manner. The first, or

Shelley-Becquer type of magic, appeals to what is indefinitely called the sense of beauty; the second, or Masters-Frost type, appeals perhaps to the sense of reality. These terms are deplorably vague. Our enjoyment of art is consequent upon the satisfaction of two kinds of hunger: hunger for beauty and hunger for knowledge. Let what the Freudians call an emotional complex be formed early in life upon the frustrated first of these hungers, and we get a lyric or colorist type of artist; upon the other, we get a realist.

Mr. Masters is of the latter type, though there are traces in him of the former as well. The curious thing is that while he frequently manifests a vivid desire to employ the lyric kind of magic, he nearly always fails at it; his average of success with the realistic magic is consistently very much higher. He is essentially a digger-out of facts, particularly of those facts which regard the mechanism of human character. In the presence of richly human material—the sufferings, the despairs, the foolish illusions, the amazing overweenings of the individual man or woman—he has the cold hunger of the microscope. Curiosity is his compelling motive, not the desire for beauty. He is insatiable for facts and events, for the secrets of human behavior. Consequently it is as a narrator that he does his best work. He is essentially a psychological story-teller, one who has chosen for his medium not prose but verse, a tumbling and jostling and overcrowded sort of verse, which, to be sure, frequently becomes prose. Was Mr. Masters wise in making this choice? He is by nature extremely loquacious and discursive—it appears to be painful for him to cut down to mere essentials—and prose would seem to be a more natural medium for such a mind. But while he almost always fails to compress his material to the point where it becomes singly powerful, it is only the fact that he uses a verse form, which compels him to compress at all; and it is also clear that at his moments of keenest pleasure in dissective narration he can only experience satisfaction in a verse of sharply accentuated ictus. It is at these moments that his work takes on the quality of realistic magic, the magic of vivid action, dramatic truthfulness, muscular reality. We are made to feel powerfully the thrust and fecundity of human life, particularly its animalism; we are also made to feel its struggle to be, or to believe itself, something more. It is in the perception and expression of this something more that Mr. Masters chiefly fails, not because he is not aware of it (he repeatedly makes it clear that he is, though not of course in the guise of sentimentality) but because at this point his power and felicity of expression abandon him. What emotional compulsion he has towards self-expression lies in the other direction. His temperament might be compared not inexactly to that of Hogarth, the Hogarth of "Marriage a la Mode" and "The Rake's Progress" rather than of the caricatures. It is in the Hogarthian type of magic that he is most proficient. . . . .

More akin to Mr. Masters, perhaps, than to Mr. Frost, Carl Sandburg nevertheless has character of his own—whatever we think of his work we cannot deny that it is individual, that it has the raciness of originality. The cumulative effect is one of vigor, a certain harshness bordering on the sadistic, a pleasant quality of sensuousness in unexpected places, ethical irony—and sentimentality. Mr. Sandburg is a socialist, and consistently preaches socialist morals. Next to his deficiencies as regards form, it is perhaps Mr. Sandburg's greatest fault that he allows the poet to be out-talked by the sociologist. If Tennyson is now regarded as a tiresome moral sentimentalist, who knows whether a future generation, to whom many of Mr. Sandburg's dreams may have become realities, will not so regard Mr. Sandburg? That is the danger, always of being doctrinaire. Doctine is interesting only when new.

Mr. Sandburg restricts himself almost entirely to free verse; among free-verse writers he is the realist, as the Imagists are the romanticists. But the free verse of the Imagists is a highly complex and formal vehicle by comparison with Mr. Sandburg's free verse; it is comparatively seldom that Mr. Sandburg betrays anything more than a rather rudimentary sense of balance or echo. For the most part, he employs a colloquial, colorful journalese prose, arranged either in successions of sharply periodic sentences, each sentence composing one verse-line, or in very long and often clumsy sentences formed of successive suspended clauses, a suspense which he ultimately relieves by a return to the periodic. In other words, Mr. Sandburg is so intent on saying, without hindrance whatsoever, precisely what he has in his mind to say, that he will not submit to the restraints of any intricate verse-form, even of his own invention, but spreads out in a sort of gnomic prose. There are exceptions, of course: in such poems as "Sketch," "Lost," "Fog," "White Shoulders," "Graves," "Monotone," "Follies," "Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard," "Poppies," — and there are others, too — there is movement, balance, sometimes a return by repetition, sometimes a return by echo. But even in these the movement, balance and return are often those of a rhetorical and orotund prose rather than of verse. The rhythm is slurred, unaccented, in fact a prose rhythm, with interspersions of single lines or groups of lines which rise to a simple cantabile sometimes a little astonishing in the context. These are Mr. Sandburg's lyric moments — the moments when the sentimental Sandburg masters the ethical or ironic Sandburg. Some of the poems listed above, and others, such as "Pals," "Gone" (which has a delightful balance), "Used Up," "Margaret," are almost completely rhythmic, rhythmic in a simple and unsubtle sense, with a regular and easily followed ictus. These are short flights; they suggest — as indeed all of Mr. Sandburg's work suggests

—the penguin aeroplanes in which novice aviators are trained; at the maximum speed the penguin barely manages to lift from the ground, and to achieve a sort of skipping glide.

Now, if these observations on Mr. Sandburg's technique are in any measure accurate, it becomes important to know whether for his sacrifice of form Mr. Sandburg receives sufficient compensation from the increased freedom of speech thus obtained. Has Mr. Sandburg by sacrifice of those qualities of verse which appeal to the ear, and in some measure to the eye, been enabled to say anything which could not have been said more beautifully, or more forcefully, by a keener use of symmetry? For the present critic the answer must, on the whole, be negative. In a general sense, Mr. Sandburg's material is the material of Frost, Masters, Gibson, Masefield; the dominant characteristic of all five men is the search for color and pathos in the lives of the commonplace. Mr. Sandburg is less selective, that is all—he spills in the chaff with the wheat. With much that is clear, hard, colorful, suggestive, there is much also that is muddy, extraneous, and dull. The other members of the realist school use the same material but, being defter artists, use it better. What Mr. Sandburg adds is the sociological element, which is the least valuable part of his book. Ethics and art cannot be married.

In this, I think, we get at the whole secret of Mr. Sandburg's weakness: he does not completely synthesize, or crystallize his poems. He always gives too much, goes too far. His poetic conception is not sufficiently sharp, and in consequence his speech cannot always be sufficiently symmetrical or intense to be called poetic speech.

Clear thought brings clear expression, and the converse also is true, as Croce says. Something of the sort is true of the writing of poetry. The clearer, the more intense the emotion or idea, the more direct, forceful, beautiful, and rhythmic will be the expression of it. By a graded scale one passes from the more to the less intense, and that is the passage from poetry to prose. Examine carefully even the more rhythmic of Mr. Sandburg's poems, and you will almost invariably find, even in poems of four lines or less, that the poem can be improved by the omission of one or more lines, one or more ideas, which only cloud the mood. It is no use arguing that Mr. Sandburg deliberately adopts this cumulative and arhythmic method, as Whitman did, out of genuine belief that such a method is truer, or subtler, than any other. The fact is that in such cases the temperament comes first, the theory afterwards; we write in such and such a way because it is the only way in which we can write. If we can then persuade others that our way is best, so much the better—for us.

Classification is apt to seem more important than it really is. It has been many times said during the past few years that it does not so much matter whether a work be called poetry or prose, provided it be true, or beautiful. This study might be closed, then, by simply asking a question: Is Mr. Sandburg a realistic poet, or a poetic realist? It is of no importance that the question be answered. It is only important, perhaps, that it shall have been asked.

Conrad Aiken

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Christopher Morley (1890—)

A LETTER TO FATHER TIME

New Year's Eve

Dear Father Time—This is your night of triumph, and it seems only fair to pay you a little tribute. Some people, in a noble mood of bravado, consider New Year's Eve an occasion of festivity. Long, long in advance they reserve a table at their favorite café; and becomingly habited in boiled shirts or gowns of the lowest visibility, and well armed with a commodity which is said to be synonymous with yourself—money—they seek to outwit you by crowding a month of merriment into half a dozen hours. Yet their victory is brief and fallacious, for if hours spin too fast by night they will move grindingly on the axle of the next morning. None of us can beat you in the end. Even the hat-check boy grows old, becomes gray and dies at last babbling of greenbacks.

To my own taste, old Time, it is more agreeable to make this evening a season of gruesome brooding. Morosely I survey the faults and follies of my last year. I am grown too canny to pour the new wine of good resolution into the old bottles of my imperfect humors. But I get a certain grim satisfaction in thinking how we all—every human being of us—share alike in bondage to your oppression. There is the only true and complete democracy, the only absolute brotherhood of man. The great ones of the earth—Charley Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks, General Pershing and Miss Amy Lowell—all these are in service to the same tyranny. Day after day slips or jolts past, joins the Great Majority; suddenly we awake with a start to find that the best of it is gone by. Surely it seems but a day ago that Stevenson set out to write a little book that was to be called "Life at Twenty-five"—before he got it written he was long past the delectable age—and now we rub our eyes and see he has been dead longer than the span of life he then so delightfully contemplated. If there is one meditation common to every adult on this globe it is this, so variously phrased, "Well, bo, Time sure does hustle."

Some of them have scurvily entreated you, old Time! The thief of youth, they have called you; a highwayman, a gipsy, a grim reaper. It seems a little unfair. For you have your kindly moods, too. Without your gentle passage where were Memory, the sweetest of lesser pleasures? You are the only medicine for many a woe, many a sore heart. And surely you have a right to reap where you alone have sown? Our strength, our wit, our comeliness, all those virtues and graces that you pilfer with such gentle hand, did you not give them to us in the first place! Give, do I say? Nay, we knew, even as we clutched them, they were but a loan. And the great immortality of the race endures, for every day that we see taken away from ourselves we see added to our children or our grandchildren. It was Shakespeare, who thought a great deal about you, who put it best:

Nativity, once in the main of light,
  Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
  And Time that gave doth now his gift confound —

It is to be hoped, my dear Time, that you have read Shakespeare's sonnets, because they will teach you a deal about the dignity of your career, and also suggest to you the only way we have of keeping up with you. There is no way of outwitting Time, Shakespeare tells his young friend, "Save breed to brave him when he takes thee hence." Or, as a poor bungling parodist revamped it:

Pep is the stuff to put Old Time on skids —
Pep in your copy, yes, and lots of kids.

It is true that Shakespeare hints another way of doing you in, which is to write sonnets as good as his. This way, needless to add, is open to few.

Well, my dear Time, you are not going to fool me into making myself ridiculous this New Year's Eve with a lot of bonny but impossible resolutions. I know that you are playing with me just as a cat plays with a mouse; yet even the most piteous mousekin sometimes causes his tormentor surprise or disappointment by getting under a bureau or behind the stove, where, for the moment, she cannot pay him. Every now and then, with a little luck, I shall pull off just such a scurry into temporary immortality. It may come by reading Dickens, or by seeing a sunset, or by lunching with friends, or by forgetting to wind the alarm clock, or by contemplating the rosy little pate of my daughter, who is still only a nine-days' wonder—so young that she doesn't even know what you are doing to her. But you are not going to have the laugh on me by luring me into resolutions. I know my weaknesses. I know that I shall probably continue to annoy newsdealers by reading the magazines on the stalls instead of buying them; that I shall put off having my hair cut; drop tobacco cinders on my waistcoat; feel bored at the idea of having to shave and get dressed; be nervous when the gas burner pops when turned off; buy more Liberty Bonds than I can afford and have to hock them at a grievous loss. I shall continue to be pleasant to insurance agents, from sheer lack of manhood; and to keep library books out over the date and so incur a fine. My only hope, you see, is resolutely to determine to persist in these failings. Then, by sheer perversity, I may grow out of them.

What avail, indeed, for any of us to make good resolutions when one contemplates the grand pageant of human frailty? Observe what I noticed the other day in the Lost and Found column of the New York *Times:*

LOST—Hotel Imperial lavatory, set of teeth. Call or communicate Flint, 134 East 43d street. Reward.

Surely, if Mr. Flint could not remember to keep his teeth in his mouth, or if anyone else was so basely whimsical as to juggle them away from him, it may well teach us to be chary of extravagant hopes for the future. Even the League of Nations, when one contemplates the sad case of Mr. Flint, becomes a rather anemic safeguard. We had better keep Mr. Flint in mind through the New Year as a symbol of human error and disappointment. And the best of it is, my dear Time, that you, too, may be a little careless. Perhaps one of these days you may doze a little and we shall steal a few hours of timeless bliss. Shall we see a little ad in the papers?—

> LOST—Sixty valuable minutes, said to have been stolen by the unworthy human race. If found, please return to Father Time, and no questions asked.

Well, my dear Time, we approach the Zero Hour. I hope you will have a Happy New Year, and conduct yourself with becoming restraint. So live, my dear fellow, that we may say, "A good Time was enjoyed by all." As the hands of the clock go over the top and into the No Man's Land of the New Year, good luck to you!

Your obedient servant!

Christopher Morley

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Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

MUCH MADNESS IS DIVINEST SENSE

Much madness is divinest sense
To a discerning eye;
Much sense the starkest madness.
'Tis the majority
In this, as all, prevails.
Assent, and you are sane;
Demur,—you're straightway dangerous,
And handled with a chain.

Emily Dickinson

THE DAISY FOLLOWS SOFT THE SUN

The daisy follows soft the sun,
And when his golden walk is done,
  Sits shyly at his feet.
He, walking, finds the flower near.
"Wherefore, marauder, art thou here?"
  "Because, sir, love is sweet!"

We are the flower, Thou the sun!
Forgive us, if as days decline,
  We nearer steal to Thee,—
Enamored of the parting west,
The peace, the flight, the amethyst,
  Night's possibility!

Emily Dickinson

THERE IS NO FRIGATE LIKE A BOOK

There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page race horses
Of prancing poetry.
This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul!

Emily Dickinson

ALTER? WHEN THE HILLS DO

Alter? When the hills do.
Falter? When the sun
Question if his glory
Be the perfect one.

Surfeit? When the daffodil
Doth of the dew:
Even as herself, O friend!
I will of you!

Emily Dickinson

I NEVER SAW A MOOR

I never saw a moor,
I never saw a sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given.

Emily Dickinson

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John Banister Tabb (1845-1909)

EVOLUTION

Out of the dusk, a shadow,
  Then, a spark;
Out of the cloud a silence,
  Then, a lark;
Out of the heart a rapture,
  Then, a pain;
Out of the dead, cold ashes,
  Life again.

John Banister Tabb

KILLDEE

Killdee! Killdee! far o'er the lea
  At twilight comes the cry.
Killdee! a marsh-mate answereth
  Across the shallow sky.

Killdee! Killdee! thrills over me
  A rhapsody of light,
As star to star gives utterance
  Between the day and night.

Killdee! Killdee! O Memory,
  The twin birds, Joy and Pain,
Like shadows parted by the sun,
  At twilight meet again.

John Banister Tabb

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Edwin Markham (1852—)

THE MAN WITH THE HOE

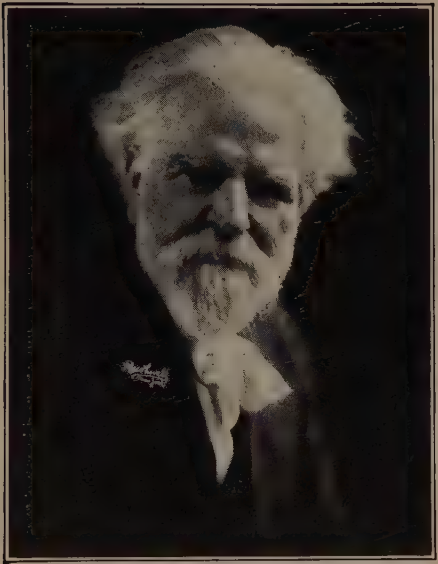
WRITTEN AFTER SEEING MILLET'S WORLD-FAMOUS PAINTING OF A BRUTALIZED TOILER

> God made man in his own image
> in the image of God made he him.—GENESIS

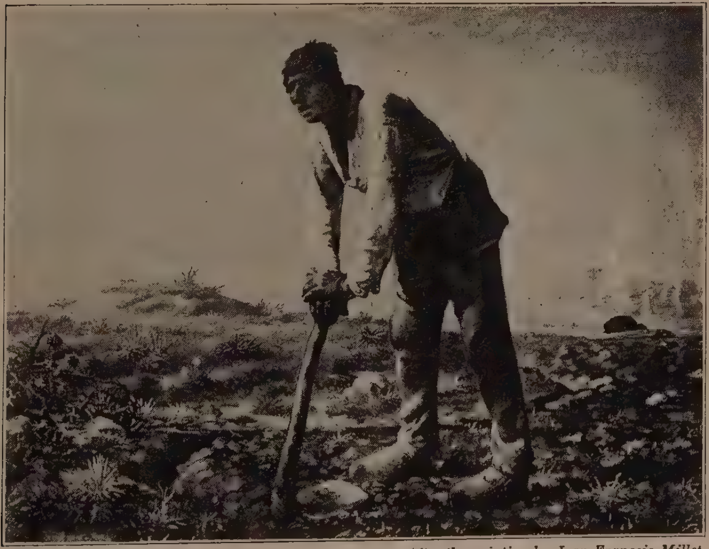
Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this—
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed—
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
More packt with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,



EDWIN MARKHAM



After the painting by Jean François Millet

THE MAN WITH THE HOE

The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Thru this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Thru this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,
Cries protest to the Judges of the World,
A protest that is also prophecy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quencht?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb Terror shall rise to judge the world,
After the silence of the centuries?

Edwin Markham

OUTWITTED

He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout. mock, and always
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!

Edwin Markham

PREPAREDNESS

For all your days prepare
And meet them ever alike:
When you are the anvil, bear—
When you are the hammer, strike.

Edwin Markham

OUR ISRAFEL (angel of music

To the Memory of Poe

O poet, not for you the trampling street,
The wrangling crowds that cry and clutch for gold;
And so you followed Beauty's flying feet
Into the dim and old.

O poet, life was bitter to your heart:
These stones have memories of the tears you shed;
Forgive the serpent tongue, the flying dart—
Forgive us from the dead.

You sang your song; we gave you scorn for pay;
For Beauty's bread we gave a stone, and yet
Because your eyes were holden on the way,
Remember to forget.

Sing, Israfel: You have your star at last,
Your morning star; but we—we still must live!
So now that all is over, all is past,
Forget, forget—forgive!

Edwin Markham

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Lizette Woodworth Reese (1856—)

TEARS

Father died few hours before check came for this

When I consider Life and its few years—
A wisp of fog betwixt us and the sun;
A call to battle, and the battle done
Ere the last echo dies within our ears;
A rose choked in the grass; an hour of fears;
The gusts that past a darkening shore do beat;
The burst of music down an unlistening street—
I wonder at the idleness of tears.
Ye old, old dead, and ye of yesternight,
Chieftains, and bards, and keepers of the sheep,
By every cup of sorrow that you had,
Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep:
Homer his sight, David his little lad!

Lizette Woodworth Reese

From *A Wayside Lute*, by Lizette Woodworth Reese. Reprinted by the permission of the author and her publisher, Thomas Bird Mosher, Portland, Maine.

A GIRL'S MOOD

I love a prayer-book;
I love a thorn tree
That blows in the grass
As white as can be.

I love an old house
Set down in the sun,
And the windy old roads
That thereabout run.

I love blue, thin frocks;
  Green stones, one and all;
A sky of stars,
  A rose at the fall.

A lover I love;
  Oh, had I but one,
I would give him these,
  Myself, and the sun.

Lizette Woodworth Reese

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A LITTLE SONG OF LIFE

am 97 Glad that I live am I;
That the sky is blue;
Glad for the country lanes,
And the fall of dew.

After the sun the rain;
After the rain the sun;
This is the way of life,
Till the work be done.

All that we need to do,
Be we low or high,
Is to see that we grow
Nearer the sky.

Lizette Woodworth Reese

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Louise Imogen Guiney (1861-1920)

THE WILD RIDE

I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses,
All night, from their stalls, the importunate pawing and neighing.

Let cowards and laggards fall back! but alert to the saddle.
Weatherworn and abreast, go men of our galloping legion,
With a stirrup-cup each to the lily of women that loves him.

The trail is through dolor and dread, over crags and morasses;
There are shapes by the way, there are things that appeal or entice us:
What odds? We are Knights of the Grail, we are vowed to the riding.

Thought's self is a vanishing wing and joy is a cobweb,
And friendship a flower in the dust, and glory a sunbeam:
Not here is our prize, nor, alas! after these our pursuing.

A dipping of plumes, a tear, a shake of the bridle,
A passing salute to this world and her pitiful beauty:
We hurry with never a word in the track of our fathers.

I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses,
All night, from their stalls, the importunate pawing and neighing.

We spur to a land of no name, outracing the stormwind;
We leap to the infinite dark like sparks from the anvil.
Thou leadest, O God! All's well with Thy troopers that follow.

Louise Imogen Guiney

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Richard Hovey (1864-1900)

UNMANIFEST DESTINY

To what new fates, my country, far
  And unforeseen of foe or friend,
Beneath what unexpected star
  Compelled to what unchosen end.

Across the sea that knows no beach,
  The Admiral of Nations guides
Thy blind obedient keels to reach
  The harbor where thy future rides!

The guns that spoke at Lexington
  Knew not that God was planning then
The trumpet word of Jefferson
  To bugle forth the rights of men.

To them that wept and cursed Bull Run,
  What was it but despair and shame?
Who saw behind the cloud the sun?
  Who knew that God was in the flame?

Had not defeat upon defeat,
  Disaster on disaster come,
The slave's emancipated feet
  Had never marched behind the drum.

There is a Hand that bends our deeds
  To mightier issues than we planned;
Each son that triumphs, each that bleeds,
  My country, serves Its dark command

I do not know beneath what sky
Nor on what seas shall be thy fate;
I only know it shall be high,
I only know it shall be great.

Richard Hovey

From *Along the Trail.* Copyright, 1898, by Small, Maynard & Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

AT THE CROSSROADS

You to the left and I to the right,
For the ways of men must sever—
And it well may be for a day and a night,
And it well may be forever.
But whether we meet or whether we part
(For our ways are past our knowing),
A pledge from the heart to its fellow heart
On the ways we all are going!
Here's luck!
For we know not where we are going.

Whether we win or whether we lose
With the hands that life is dealing,
It is not we nor the ways we choose
But the fall of the cards that's sealing.
There's a fate in love and a fate in fight,
And the best of us all go under—
And whether we're wrong or whether we're right,
We win, sometimes, to our wonder.
Here's luck!
That we may not yet go under!

With a steady swing and an open brow
We have tramped the ways together,
But we're clasping hands at the crossroads now
In the Fiend's own night for weather;

And whether we bleed or whether we smile
In the leagues that lie before us,
The ways of life are many a mile,
And the dark of Fate is o'er us.
Here's luck!
And a cheer for the dark before us!

You to the left and I to the right,
For the ways of men must sever,
And it well may be for a day and a night,
And it well may be forever!
But whether we live or whether we die
(For the end is past our knowing),
Here's two frank hearts and the open sky,
Be a fair or an ill wind blowing!
Here's luck!
In the teeth of all winds blowing.

Richard Hovey

From *Songs of Vagabondia.* Copyright, 1908, by Small, Maynard & Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

Madison Cawein (1865-1914)

SNOW

The moon, like a round device
On a shadowy shield of war,
Hangs white in a heaven of ice
With a solitary star.

The wind has sunk to a sigh,
And the waters are stern with frost;
And gray, in the eastern sky,
The last snow-cloud is lost.

White fields, that are winter-starved,
Black woods, that are winter-fraught,
Cold, harsh as a face death-carved,
With the iron of some black thought.

Madison Cawein

SOUNDS AND SIGHTS

Little leaves, that lean your ears
From each branch and bough in spring,
What is that your rapture hears?
Song of bird or flight of wing,
All so eager, little ears?

"Hush, oh, hush! Oh, don't you hear
Steps of beauty drawing near?
Neither flight of bee or bird—
Hark! the steps of Love are heard!"

Little buds that crowd with eyes
Every bush and tree,

What is this that you surmise?
What is that which you would see,
So attentive, little eyes?

Look, oh, look! Oh, can't you see
Loveliness camps 'neath each tree?
See her hosts and hear them sing,
Marching with the maiden Spring!"

Madison Cawein

THE LESSON

This is the lesson I have learned of Beauty:
  Who gathers flowers finds that flowers fade;
Who sets love in his heart above his duty
  Misses the part for which that love was made.

Than passion, haply, there is nothing madder:
  Who plucks its red rose plucks with it a thorn:
More than soul's pain what hurt can make us sadder?
  And yet of this immortal things are born.

Madison Cawein

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VOICES OF THE NEW AMERICA

Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869—)

american [illegible]
great[illegible]
living [illegible]

RICHARD CORY

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
  We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
  Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
  And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
  "Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king,
  And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
  To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
  And went without the meat and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
  Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

MINIVER CHEEVY

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn
  Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
  And he had reasons.

"Richard Cory" and "Miniver Cheevy" are from *The Children of the Night* by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Used by special permission of the author and by courtesy of Charles Scribner's Sons.

Miniver loved the days of old
  When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
  Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
  And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
  And Priam's neighbors.
[illegible]

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
  That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
  And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici, famous for [illegible]
  Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
  Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
  And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the medieval grace
  Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
  But sore annoyed was he without it;
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
  And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
  Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
  And kept on drinking.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

THE MASTER

925

(Lincoln)

B4x

A flying word from here and there
Had sown the name at which we sneered,
But soon the name was everywhere,
To be reviled and then revered:
A presence to be loved and feared,
We cannot hide it, or deny
That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
May be forgotten by and by.

He came when days were perilous
And hearts of men were sore beguiled;
And having made his note of us,
He pondered and was reconciled.
Was ever master yet so mild
As he, and so untamable?
We doubted, even when he smiled,
Not knowing what he knew so well.

He knew that undeceiving fate
Would shame us whom he served unsought;
He knew that he must wince and wait—
The jest of those for whom he fought;
He knew devoutly what he thought
Of us and of our ridicule;
He knew that we must all be taught
Like little children in a school.

We gave a glamour to the task
That he encountered and saw through;
But little of us did he ask,
And little did we ever do.

From *The Town Down the River* by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Used by special permission of the author and by the courtesy of Charles Scribner's Sons.

And what appears if we review
The season when we railed and chaffed?
It is the face of one who knew
That we were learning while we laughed.

The face that in our vision feels
Again the venom that we flung,
Transfigured to the world reveals
The vigilance to which we clung.
Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
The mysteries that are untold,
The face we see was never young
Nor could it wholly have been old.

For he, to whom we had applied
Our shopman's test of age and worth,
Was elemental when he died,
As he was ancient at his birth:
The saddest among kings of earth,
Bowed with a galling crown, this man
Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
Laconic—and Olympian.

The love, the grandeur, and the fame
Are bounded by the world alone;
The calm, the smouldering, and the flame
Of awful patience were his own:
With him they are forever flown
Past all our fond self-shadowings,
Wherewith we cumber the Unknown
As with inept, Icarian wings.

For we were not as other men:
'Twas ours to soar and his to see;
But we are coming down again,
And we shall come down pleasantly;
Nor shall we longer disagree

On what it is to be sublime,
But flourish in our perigee lowest point of moon
And have one Titan at a time. a great one

Edwin Arlington Robinson

CALVARY

Friendless and faint, with martyred steps and slow,
Faint for the flesh, but for the spirit free,
Stung by the mob that came to see the show,
The Master toiled along to Calvary;
We gibed him, as he went, with houndish glee,
Till his dimned eyes for us did overflow;
We cursed his vengeless hands thrice wretchedly, —
And this was nineteen hundred years ago.

But after nineteen hundred years the shame
Still clings, and we have not made good the loss
That outraged faith has entered in his name.
Ah, when shall come love's courage to be strong!
Tell me, O Lord—tell me, O Lord, how long
Are we to keep Christ writhing on the cross!

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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FLAMMONDE

The man Flammonde, from God knows where,
With firm address and foreign air,
With news of nations in his talk
And something royal in his walk,
With glint of iron in his eyes,
But never doubt, nor yet surprise,
Appeared, and stayed, and held his head
As one by kings accredited.

Erect, with his alert repose
About him, and about his clothes,
He pictured all tradition hears
Of what we owe to fifty years.
His cleansing heritage of taste
Paraded neither want nor waste;
And what he needed for his fee
To live, he borrowed graciously.

He never told us what he was,
Or what mischance, or other cause,
Had banished him from better days
To play the Prince of Castaways.
Meanwhile he played surprising well
A part, for most, unplayable;
In fine, one pauses, half afraid
To say for certain that he played.

For that, one may as well forego
Conviction as to yes or no;
Nor can I say just how intense
Would then have been the difference
To several who, having striven
In vain to get what he was given,
Would see the stranger taken on
By friends not easy to be won.

Moreover, many a malcontent
He soothed and found munificent;
His courtesy beguiled and foiled
Suspicion that his years were soiled;
His mien distinguished any crowd,
His credit strengthened when he bowed;
And women, young and old, were fond
Of looking at the man Flammonde.

There was a woman in our town
On whom the fashion was to frown;

But while our talk renewed the tinge
Of a long-faded scarlet fringe,
The man Flammonde saw none of that,
And what he saw we wondered at—
That none of us, in her distress,
Could hide or find our littleness.

There was a boy that all agreed
Had shut within him the rare seed
Of learning. We could understand,
But none of us could lift a hand.
The man Flammonde appraised the youth,
And told a few of us the truth;
And thereby, for a little gold,
A flowered future was unrolled.

There were two citizens who fought
For years and years, and over naught;
They made life awkward for their friends,
And shortened their own dividends.
The man Flammonde said what was wrong
Should be made right; nor was it long
Before they were again in line,
And had each other in to dine.

And these I mention were but four
Of many out of many more.
So much for them. But what of him—
So firm in every look and limb
What small satanic sort of kink
Was in his brain? What broken link
Withheld him from the destinies
That came so near to being his?

What was he, when we came to sift
His meaning, and to note the drift
Of incommunicable ways
That make us ponder while we praise?

Why was it that his charm revealed
Somehow the surface of a shield?
What was it that we never caught?
What was he, and what was he not?

How much it was of him we met
We cannot ever know; nor yet
Shall all he gave us quite atone
For what was his and his alone;
Nor need we now, since he knew best,
Nourish an ethical unrest;
Rarely at once will nature give
The power to be Flammonde and live.

We cannot know how much we learn
From those who never will return,
Until a flash of unforeseen
Remembrance falls on what has been.
We've each a darkening hill to climb:
And this is why, from time to time
In Tilbury Town, we look beyond
Horizons for the man Flammonde.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

From *The Man Against the Sky* by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Used by special permission of the author and by special arrangement with The Macmillan Company, publishers.

THE DARK HILLS

Dark hills at evening in the west,
  Where sunset hovers like a sound
Of golden horns that sang to rest
  Old bones of warriors under ground,
Far now from all the bannered ways
  Where flash the legions of the sun,
You fade—as if the last of days
  Were fading and all wars were done.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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Edgar Lee Masters (1869—)

SLIP SHOE LOVEY

a slov

You're the cook's understudy,
A gentle idiot body.
You are slender like a broom
Weaving up and down the room,
With your dirt hair in a twist
And your left eye in a mist;
Never thinkin', never hopin'
With your wet mouth open;
So bewildered and so busy
As you scrape the dirty kettles,
O Slip Shoe Lizzie,
As you rattle with the pans.
There's a clatter of old metals,
O Slip Shoe Lovey,
As you clean the milk cans.
You're a greasy little dovey,
A laughing scullery daughter,
As you slop the dish water,
So abstracted and so dizzy,
O Slip Shoe Lizzie!

So mussy, little hussie,
With the china that you break,
And the kitchen in a smear
When the bread is yet to bake,
And the market things are here—
O Slip Shoe Lovey!

You are hurrying and scurrying
From the sink to the oven,
So forgetful and so sloven.

You are bustling and hustling
From the pantry to the door,
With your shoe strings on the floor,
And your apron strings a-draggin',
And your spattered skirt a-saggin'.

You're an angel, idiot lovey;
One forgives you all this clatter
Washing dishes, beating batter.
But there is another matter
As you dream above the sink:
You're in love pitter-patter,
With the butcher-boy, I think.
And he'll get you, he will get you
If he hasn't got you yet.

For he means to make you his,
O Slip Shoe Liz.
And your open mouth is wet
To a little boyish chatter.
You're an easy thing to flatter
With your hank of hair a-twist
And your left eye in a mist—
O Slip Shoe Lovey!

So hurried and so flurried,
And just a little worried,
You lean about the room,
Like a mop, like a broom.
O Slip Shoe Lovey!
O Slip Shoe Lovey!

Edgar Lee Masters

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THE IDIOT

Concerning death
Our idea of [illegible]?

Two children in a garden,
Shouting for joy,
Were playing dolls and houses,
A girl and boy.
I smiled at a neighbor window,
And watched them play
Under a budding oak tree
On a wintry day.

And then a board half broken
In the high fence
Fell over, and there entered,
I know not whence,
A jailbird face of yellow
With a vacant sulk;
His body was a sickly
Thing of bulk.

His open mouth was slavering,
And a green light
Turned disc-like in his eyeballs,
Like a dog's at night.
His teeth were like a giant's,
And far apart;
I saw him reel on the children
With a stopping heart.
He trampled their dolls and ruined
The house they made;
He struck to earth the children
With a dirty spade.
As a tiger growls with an antelope
After the hunt,
Over the little faces
I heard him grunt.

I stood at the window frozen
And short of breath,
And then I saw the idiot
Was Master Death!

A bird in the lilac bushes
Began to sing.
The garden colored before me
To the kiss of spring.
And the yellow face in a moment
Was a mystic white;
The matted hair was softened
To starry light.
The ragged coat flowed downward
Into a robe;
He carried a sword and a balance
And stood on a globe.
I watched him from the window
Under a spell;
The idiot was the angel
Azrael! Jewish and Moham. ang

Edgar Lee Masters

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EMILY SPARKS

Where is my boy, my boy—
In what far part of the world?
The boy I loved best of all in the school?—
I, the teacher, the old maid, the virgin heart,
Who made them all my children.
Did I know my boy aright,
Thinking of him as spirit aflame,
Active, ever aspiring?
Oh, boy, boy, for whom I prayed and prayed
In many a watchful hour at night,
Do you remember the letter I wrote you

Of the beautiful love of Christ?
And whether you ever took it or not,
My boy, wherever you are,
Work for your soul's sake,
That all the clay of you, all of the dross of you,
May yield to the fire of you,
Till the fire is nothing but light! . . .
Nothing but light!

Edgar Lee Masters

REUBEN PANTIER

Well, Emily Sparks, your prayers were not wasted,
Your love was not all in vain.
I owe whatever I was in life
To your hope that would not give me up,
To your love that saw me still as good.
Dear Emily Sparks, let me tell you the story.
I pass the effect of my father and mother;
The milliner's daughter made me trouble
And out I went in the world,
Where I passed through every peril known
Of wine and women and joy of life.
One night, in a room in the Rue de Rivoli,
I was drinking wine with a black-eyed cocotte,
And the tears swam into my eyes.
She thought they were amorous tears and smiled
For thought of her conquest over me.
But my soul was three thousand miles away,
In the days when you taught me in Spoon River.
And just because you no more could love me,
Nor pray for me, nor write me letters,
The eternal silence of you spoke instead.
And the black-eyed cocotte took the tears for hers,
As well as the deceiving kisses I gave her.
Somehow, from that hour, I had a new vision—
Dear Emily Sparks!

Edgar Lee Masters

ANNE RUTLEDGE

Out of me unworthy and unknown
The vibrations of deathless music;
"With malice toward none, with charity for all."
Out of me the forgiveness of millions toward millions,
And the beneficent face of a nation
Shining with justice and truth.
I am Anne Rutledge who sleep beneath these weeds,
Beloved in life of Abraham Lincoln,
Wedded to him not through union,
But through separation.
Bloom forever, O Republic,
From the dust of my bosom!

Edgar Lee Masters

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JAY HAWKINS

Jay walking! Reading the head lines! Struck down
By a fliver and killed while reading
About the man-girl slayer!
For years haunting the news stands,
Waiting for the latest paper from Chicago,
Cursed with the newspaper habit: ✓
Snuffing the powder of monstrous news
Heralding shame and hate and murder:
What dive was raided, what rum was seized;
Who was indicted, and who was lynched;
Who got the rope at the end of the trial;
What governor, officer was accused
Of bribery, graft or peculation; embezzle
Whose picture appeared divorced or caught—
(Were they never noble, did they never achieve,
And so have their pictures printed?)

The poems "Jay Hawkins," "Howard Lamson," "Hosea Chambers," "Henry Cogdal," "Morgan Oakley," and "Angela Sanger" are from *The New Spoon River*. Reprinted by permission of the author and his publishers, Boni & Liveright.

All about hating, hunting, fighting,
Lying, stealing, lusting, wasting,
Who had been killed, and who had been hanged.
And I ask if life is full of beauty,
And full of nobility and creating,
Why don't they write about it?

Edgar Lee Masters

HOWARD LAMSON

Ice cannot shiver in the cold,
Nor stones shrink from the lapping flame.
Eyes that are sealed, no more have tears;
Ears that are stopped hear nothing ill;
Hearts turned to silt are strange to pain;
Tongues that are dumb report no loss;
Hands stiffened, well may idle be;
No sigh is from a breathless breast.
Beauty may fade, but closed eyes see not;
Sorrow may wail, but stopped ears hear not;
Work is, but folded hands need work not;
Nothing to say is for dumb tongues.
The rolling earth rolls on and on
With trees and stones and winding streams—
My dream is what the hill-side dreams!

Edgar Lee Masters

HOSEA CHAMBERS

You can be sure, ye living ones,
That every lie you speak or live,
However small,
Is like a brick or a board out of line or plumb
In the house of your life;
And every lie that you speak or live
Will call for another lie in line or in plumb with
  that lie,

Till your house will lean and stand awry,
Visible against gray clouds,
And against moonless midnights;
Visible even when the north star is hidden!

Edgar Lee Masters

HENRY COGDAL

Bring from Big Creek a huge boulder,
Put it at the head of me,
And bolt upon it a tablet of bronze
With these words:
Here was buried the body of Henry Cogdal,
A private who fell in the war for Wisdom
And Beauty, and Truth.
He strove to be a guide to the creative spirit,
And to uphold the singers and tellers of stories,
Who keep the vision of a nation
Upon the clear realities of life.
At the height of his power and work
He lost his place and means of support
Through a rich manufactuer who bought the newspaper,
And began to popularize it,
And to lower its criticisms
To the level of advertisers and optimists:—
There will come a time when crimes against culture
Will be punished the same as murder!

Edgar Lee Masters

MORGAN OAKLEY

There is a time for vine leaves in the hair,
And a time for thorns on the brow,
Even as life is both ecstasy and agony,
And as Nature grows both leaves and thorns.

In youth I knew love and victory;
In age loneliness and pain.
But life is to be lived neither as leaves,
Nor as thorns, but through both.
I came to the wisdom of barren boughs,
And the desolation of unleaved thorns,
Which remembered the leaves!

Edgar Lee Masters

ANGELA SANGER

In March when the melting eaves are a prism's edge,
And icicles burn at the tips with scarlet flame,
And drip to a rataplan of chrysolites;
When the drift of a white winged cloud is over the tree tops
That lean to a flapping gale from the yellow ravine—
Then the dream of a garden returned to me, and I walked
Where the stalks of rusted sunflowers lisped the breeze.
And what were last year's failures, frosts, and worms?
I would plant again for the joy of growing things;
Fight for the corn of life, for the blossoms of beauty.
And with every spring with a heart that never tired,
The dream of winning a love that should thrive, be free
Of cares that choke, betrayals that break, or doubts
That chill the leaves put forth to a sanguine sun!
O, garden by which I lived! O, earth of my heart!
How was it enriched by the fallen stalks of hope?
What did I gather but strength to struggle in Springs
Of the blue sky thrill of the dream?

Edgar Lee Masters

It E.A. Robinson

Robert Frost (1875—)

THE PASTURE

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away
(And wait to watch the water clear, I may):
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf
That's standing by the mother. It's so young,
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.
I sha'n't be gone long.—You come too.

Robert Frost

The poems "The Pasture," "Mending Wall," and "The Code," are from *North of Boston* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

MOWING

There was never a sound beside the wood but one,
And that was my long scythe whispering to the ground.
What was it it whispered? I knew not well myself;
Perhaps it was something about the heat of the sun,
Something, perhaps, about the lack of sound—
And that was why it whispered and did not speak.
It was no dream of the gift of idle hours,
Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf;
Anything more than the truth would have seemed too
weak
To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows,
Not without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers
(Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.
The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows.
My long scythe whispered and left the hay to make.

Robert Frost

From *A Boy's Will* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

His best poem
In East yet

MENDING WALL

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen ground swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine, and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him
He only says: "Good fences make good neighbors."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,

And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

Robert Frost

THE CODE

There were three in the meadow by the brook
Gathering up windrows, piling cocks of hay,
With an eye always lifted toward the west
Where an irregular sun-bordered cloud
Darkly advanced with a perpetual dagger
Flickering across its bosom. Suddenly
One helper, thrusting pitchfork in the ground,
Marched himself off the field and home. One stayed.
The town-bred farmer failed to understand.

"What is there wrong?"

"Something you just now said."

"What did I say?"

"About our taking pains."

"To cock the hay?—because it's going to shower.
I said that more than half an hour ago.
I said it to myself as much as you."

"You didn't know. But James is one big fool.
He thought you meant to find fault with his work.
That's what the average farmer would have meant.
James would take time, of course, to chew it over
Before he acted: he's just got round to act."

"He is a fool if that's the way he takes me."

"Don't let it bother you. You've found out something.
The hand that knows his business won't be told
To do work better or faster—those two things.
I'm as particular as anyone:
Most likely I'd have served you just the same.
But I know you don't understand our ways.
You were just talking what was in your mind,
What was in all our minds, and you weren't hinting.
Tell you a story of what happened once:
I was up here in Salem at a man's
Named Sanders with a gang of four or five
Doing the haying. No one liked the boss.
He was one of the kind sports call a spider,
All wiry arms and legs that spread out wavy
From a humped body nigh as big's a biscuit.
But work! that man could work, especially
If by so doing he could get more work
Out of his hired help. I'm not denying
He was hard on himself. I couldn't find
That he kept any hours—not for himself.
Daylight and lantern-light were one to him:
I've heard him pounding in the barn all night.
But what he liked was someone to encourage.
Them that he couldn't lead he'd get behind
And drive, the way you can, you know, in mowing—
Keep at their heels and threaten to mow their legs off.

I'd seed about enough of his bulling tricks
(We call that bulling). I'd been watching him.
So when he paired off with me in the hayfield
To load the load, thinks I, Look out for trouble.
I built the load and topped it off; old Sanders
Combed it down with a rake and says, 'O. K.'
Everything went well till we reached the barn
With a big catch to empty in a bay.
You understand that meant the easy job
For the man up on top of throwing *down*
The hay and rolling it off wholesale,
Where on a mow it would have been slow lifting.
You wouldn't think a fellow'd need much urging
Under these circumstances, would you now?
But the old fool seizes his fork in both hands,
And looking up bewhiskered out of the pit,
Shouts like an army captain, 'Let her come!'
Thinks I, D'ye mean it? 'What was that you said?'
I asked out loud, so's there'd be no mistake,
'Did you say, Let her come?' 'Yes, let her come.'
He said it over, but he said it softer.
Never you say a thing like that to a man,
Not if he values what he is. God, I'd as soon
Murdered him as left out his middle name.
I'd built the load and knew right where to find
Two or three forkfuls I picked lightly round for
Like meditating, and then I just dug in
And dumped the rackful on him in ten lots,
I looked over the side once in the dust
And caught sight of him treading-water-like,
Keeping his head above. 'Damn ye,' I says,
'That gets ye!' He squeaked like a squeezed rat.

That was the last I saw or heard of him,
I cleaned the rack and drove out to cool off.

As I sat mopping hayseed from my neck,
And sort of waiting to be asked about it,
One of the boys sings out, 'Where's the old man?'
'I left him in the barn under the hay.
If ye want him, ye can go and dig him out.'
They realized from the way I swobbed my neck
More than was needed something must be up.
They headed for the barn; I stayed where I was.
They told me afterward. First they forked hay,
A lot of it, out into the barn floor.
Nothing! They listened for him. Not a rustle.
I guess they thought I'd spiked him in the temple
Before I buried him, or I couldn't have managed.
They excavated more. 'Go keep his wife
Out of the barn.' Someone looked in a window,
And curse me if he wasn't in the kitchen
Slumped way down in a chair, with both his feet
Stuck in the oven, the hottest day that summer.
He looked so clean disgusted from behind
There was no one that dared to stir him up,
Or let him know that he was being looked at.
Apparently I hadn't buried him
(I may have knocked him down); but my just trying
To bury him had hurt his dignity.
He had gone to the house so's not to meet me.
He kept away from us all afternoon.
We tended to his hay. We saw him out
After a while picking peas in his garden:
He couldn't keep away from doing something."

"Weren't you relieved to find he wasn't dead?"

"No! and yet I don't know—it's hard to say.
I went about to kill him fair enough."

"You took an awkward way. Did he discharge you?"

"Discharge me? No! He knew I did just right."

Robert Frost

THE GRINDSTONE

Having a wheel and four legs of its own
Has never availed the cumbersome grindstone
To get it anywhere that I can see.
These hands have helped it go, and even race;
Not all the motion, though, they ever lent,
Not all the miles it may have thought it went,
Have got it one step from the starting place.
It stands beside the same old apple tree.
The shadow of the apple tree is thin
Upon it now; its feet are fast in snow.
All other farm machinery's gone in,
And some of it on no more legs and wheel
Than the grindstone can boast to stand or go.
(I'm thinking chiefly of the wheelbarrow.)
For months it hasn't known the taste of steel,
Washed down with rusty water in the tin.
But standing outdoors hungry, in the cold,
Except in towns at night, is not a sin.
And, anyway, its standing in the yard
Under a ruinous live apple tree
Has nothing any more to do with me,
Except that I remember how of old
One summer day, all day I drove it hard,
And someone mounted on it rode it hard,
And he and I between us ground a blade.

I gave it the preliminary spin,
And poured on water (tears it might have been);
And when it almost gayly jumped and flowed,

A Father-Time-like man got on and rode,
Armed with a scythe and spectacles that glowed.
He turned on will-power to increase the load
And slow me down—and I abruptly slowed,
Like coming to a sudden railroad station.
I changed from hand to hand in desperation.
I wondered what machine of ages gone
This represented an improvement on.
For all I knew it may have sharpened spears
And arrowheads itself. Much use for years
Had gradually worn it an oblate
Spheroid that kicked and struggled in the gate,
Appearing to return me hate for hate;
(But I forgive it now as easily
As any other boyhood enemy
Whose pride has failed to get him anywhere).
I wondered who it was the man thought ground—
The one who held the wheel back or the one
Who gave his life to keep it going round?
I wondered if he really thought it fair
For him to have the say when we were done.
Such were the bitter thoughts to which I turned.

Not for myself was I so much concerned.
Oh no!—although, of course, I could have found
A better way to pass the afternoon
Than grinding discord out of a grindstone,
And beating insects at their gritty tune.
Nor was I for the man so much concerned.
Once when the grindstone almost jumped its bearing
It looked as if he might be badly thrown
And wounded on his blade. So far from caring,
I laughed inside, and only cranked the faster,
(It ran as if it wasn't greased but glued);

I'd welcome any moderate disaster
That might be calculated to postpone
What evidently nothing could conclude.
The thing that made me more and more afraid
Was that we'd ground it sharp and hadn't known,
And now were only wasting precious blade.
And when he raised it dripping once and tried
The creepy edge of it with wary touch,
And viewed it over his glasses funny-eyed,
Only disinterestedly to decide
It needed a turn more, I could have cried
Wasn't there danger of a turn too much?
Mightn't we make it worse instead of better?
I was for leaving something to the whetter.
What if it wasn't all it should be? I'd
Be satisfied if he'd be satisfied.

Robert Frost

NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

Robert Frost

The poems "The Grindstone" and "Nothing Gold Can Stay" are from *New Hampshire* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Co.

BIRCHES

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.

But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.
Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
fern
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.
But I was going to say when Truth broke in
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
(Now am I free to be poetical?)
I should prefer to have some boy bend them
As he went out and in to fetch the cows—
Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father's trees
By riding them down over and over again
Until he took the stiffness out of them,
And not one but hung limp, not one was left
For him to conquer. He learned all there was
To learn about not launching out too soon
And so not carrying the tree away

Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.

So was I once myself a swinger of birches.
And so I dream of going back to be.
It's when I'm weary of considerations,
And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having lashed across it open.
I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.
May no fate willfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better.
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more
But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

Robert Frost

From *Mountain Interval* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

Carl Sandburg (1878—)

√

CHICAGO

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads, and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads, and Freight Handler to the Nation.

Carl Sandburg

SKETCH

The shadows of the ships
Rock on the crest
In the low blue lustre
Of the tardy and the soft inrolling tide.

A long brown bar at the dip of the sky
Puts an arm of sand in the span of salt.

The lucid and endless wrinkles
Draw in, lapse and withdraw.
Wavelets crumble and white spent bubbles
Wash on the floor of the beach.

Rocking on the crest
In the low blue lustre
Are the shadows of the ships.

Carl Sandburg

LOST

Desolate and lone
All night long on the lake
Where fog trails and mist creeps,
The whistle of a boat
Calls and cries unendingly,
Like some lost child
In tears and trouble
Hunting the harbor's breast
And the harbor's eyes.

Carl Sandburg

FOG

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Carl Sandburg

NOCTURNE IN A DESERTED BRICKYARD

Stuff of the moon
Runs on the lapping sand
Out to the longest shadows.
Under the curving willows,
And round the creep of the wave line,
Fluxions of yellow and dusk on the waters
Make a wide dreaming pansy of an old pond in the night.

Carl Sandburg

The poems "Chicago," "Sketch," "Lost," "Fog," and "Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard" are from *Chicago Poems* by Carl Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

GRASS

Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.
Shovel them under and let me work—
I am the grass; I cover all.

And pile them high at Gettysburg
And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.
Shovel them under and let me work.
Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor:
What place is this?
Where are we now?

I am the grass.
Let me work.

Carl Sandburg

COOL TOMBS

When Abraham Lincoln was shoveled into the tombs, he forgot the copperheads and the assassin . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs.

And Ulysess Grant lost all thought of con men and Wall Street, cash and collateral turned ashes . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs.

Pocahontas' body, lovely as a poplar, sweet as a red haw in November or a pawpaw in May, did she wonder? does she remember? . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs?

Take any streetful of people buying clothes and groceries, cheering a hero, or throwing confetti and blowing tin horns . . . tell me if the lovers are losers . . . tell me if any get more than the lovers . . . in the dust . . . in the cool tombs.

Carl Sandburg

PRAYERS OF STEEL

Lay me on an anvil, O God.
Beat me and hammer me into a crowbar.
Let me pry loose old walls.
Let me lift and loosen old foundations.

Lay me on an anvil, O God.
Beat me and hammer me into a steel spike.
Drive me into the girders that hold a skyscraper together.
Take red-hot rivets and fasten me into the central girders.
Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars.

Carl Sandburg

The poems "Grass," "Cool Tombs," and "Prayers of Steel" are from *Cornhuskers* by Carl Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company. Copyright, 1918.

WINDS OF THE WINDY CITY

A man came as a witness saying:
"I listened to the Great Lakes
And I listened to the Grand Prairie,
And they had little to say to each other,
A whisper or so in a thousand years.
'Some of the cities are big,' said one.
'And some not so big,' said another.
'And sometimes the cities are all gone,'
Said a block knob bluff to a light green sea."

Winds of the Windy City, come out of the prairie, all the way from Medicine Hat.
Come out of the inland sea blue water, come where they nickname a city for you.

Corn wind in the fall, come off the black lands,
come off the whisper of the silk hangers,
the lap of the flat spear leaves.

Blue water wind in summer, come off the blue miles
of lake, carry your inland sea blue fingers,
carry us cool, carry your blue to our homes.

White spring winds, come off the bag wool clouds,
come off the running melted snow, come white
as the arms of snow-born children.

Gray fighting winter winds, come along on the tearing
blizzard tails, the snouts of the hungry
hunting storms, come fighting gray in winter.

Winds of the Windy City,
Winds of corn and sea blue,
Spring wind white and fighting winter gray,
Come home here—they nickname a city for you.

The wind of the lake shore waits and wanders.
The heave of the shore wind hunches the sand piles.
The winkers of the morning stars count out cities
And forget the numbers.

Carl Sandburg

WASHINGTON MONUMENT BY NIGHT

I

The stone goes straight.
A lean swimmer dives into night sky,
Into half-moon mist.

2

Two trees are coal black.
This is a great white ghost between.
It is cool to look at.
Strong men, strong women, come here.

3

Eight years is a long time
To be fighting all the time.

4

The republic is a dream.
Nothing happens unless first a dream.

5

The wind bit hard at Valley Forge one Christmas.
Soldiers tied rags on their feet.
Red footprints wrote on the snow . . .
. . . and stone shoots into stars here
. . . into half-moon mist tonight.

6

Tongues wrangled dark at a man.
He buttoned his overcoat and stood alone.
In a snowstorm, red hollyberries, thoughts,
    he stood alone.

7

Women said: He is lonely
. . . fighting . . . fighting . . . eight years . . .

8

The name of an iron man goes over the world.
It takes a long time to forget an iron man.

9

. . .   .
. . .   .

Carl Sandburg

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Vachel Lindsay (1879—)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(*In Springfield, Illinois*)

.1914

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight in our little town,
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-house pacing up and down.

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play;
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones,
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

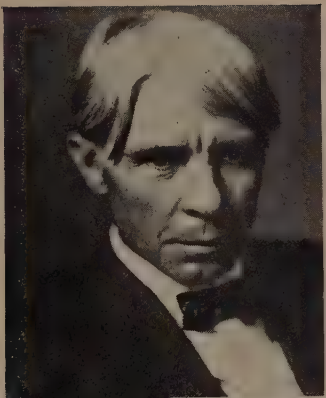
A bronzed lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl,
Make his the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us:—as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long,
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why;
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly, and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come—the shining hope of Europe free:



CARL
SANDBURG

EDGAR LEE
MASTERS

After the portrait by
Lilla Cabot Perry

EDWIN
ARLINGTON
ROBINSON

VACHEL LINDSAY

ROBERT FROST

VOICES OF THE NEW AMERICA

The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

Vachel Lindsay

THE SANTA-FÉ TRAIL—A HUMORESQUE

(I asked the old negro: "What is that bird that sings so well?" He answered: "That is the Rachel-Jane." "Hasn't it another name—lark, or thrush, or the like?" "No. Jus' Rachel-Jane.")

I. In Which A Racing Auto Comes From The East

To be sung delicately, to an improvised tune.

This is the order of the music of the morning:—
First, from the far east comes but a crooning.
The crooning turns to a sunrise singing.
Hark to the *calm*-horn, *balm*-horn, *psalm*-horn.
Hark to the *faint*-horn, *quaint*-horn, *saint*-horn . . . .

To be sung or read with great speed.

Hark to the *pace*-horn, *chase*-horn, *race*-horn.
And the holy veil of the dawn has gone.
Swiftly the brazen car comes on.
It burns in the east as the sunrise burns.
I see great flashes where the far trail turns.
Its eyes are lamps like the eyes of dragons.
It drinks gasoline from big red flagons.
Butting through the delicate mists of the morning,

It comes like lightning, goes past roaring.
It will hail all the windmills, taunting, ringing,
Dodge the cyclones,
Count the milestones,
On through the ranges the prairie-dog tills—
Scooting past the cattle on the thousand hills . . . .
Ho for the tear-horn, scare-horn, dare-horn,
Ho for the *gay*-horn, *bark*-horn, *bay*-horn.
Ho for Kansas, land that restores us
When houses choke us, and great books bore us!
Sunrise Kansas, harvesters' Kansas,
A million men have found you before us.

To be read or sung in a rolling bass, with some deliberation.

II. In Which Many Autos Pass Westward

In an even, deliberate, narrative manner.

I want live things in their pride to remain.
I will not kill one grasshopper vain
Though he eats a hole in my shirt like a door.
I let him out, give him one chance more.
Perhaps, while he gnaws my hat in his whim,
Grasshopper lyrics occur to him.

I am a tramp by the long trail's border,
Given to squalor, rags, and disorder.
I nap and amble and yawn and look,
Write fool-thoughts in my grubby book,
Recite to the children, explore at my ease,
Work when I work, beg when I please,
Give crank-drawings that make folks stare
To the half-grown boys in the sunset glare,
And get me a place to sleep in the hay
At the end of a live-and-let-live day.

I find in the stubble of the new-cut weeds
A whisper and a feasting, all one needs:
The whisper of the strawberries, white and red,
Here where the new-cut weeds lie dead.

But I would not walk all alone till I die
Without some life-drunk horns going by.
Up round this apple-earth they come
Blasting the whispers of the morning dumb:—
Cars in a plain realistic row.
And fair dreams fade
When the raw horns blow.

On each snapping pennant
A big black name:—
The careering city
Whence each car came.
They tour from Memphis, Atlanta, Savannah,
Tallahassee, and Texarkana.
They tour from St. Louis, Columbus, Manistee,
They tour from Peoria, Davenport, Kankakee.
Cars from Concord, Niagara, Boston,
Cars from Topeka, Emporia, and Austin.
Cars from Chicago, Hannibal, Cairo.
Cars from Alton, Oswego, Toledo.
Cars from Buffalo, Kokomo, Delphi,
Cars from Lodi, Carmi, Loami.
Ho for Kansas, land that restores us
When houses choke us and great books bore us!

Like a train caller in a Union Depot.

While I watch the highroad
And look at the sky,
While I watch the clouds in amazing grandeur
Roll their legions without rain
Over the blistering Kansas plain—
While I sit by the milestone
And watch the sky,
The United States
Goes by.

To be given very harshly with a snapping explosiveness.

Listen to the iron-horns, ripping, racking.
Listen to the quack-horns, slack and clacking.
Way down the road, trilling like a toad,
Here comes the *dice*-horn, here comes the *vice*-horn,
Here comes the *snarl*-horn, *brawl*-horn *lewd*-horn,
Followed by the *prude*-horn, bleak and squeaking:—
(Some of them from Kansas, some of them from Kansas.)
Here comes the *hod*-horn, *plod*-horn, *sod*-horn.
Nevermore-to-*roam*-horn, *loam*-horn, *home*-horn.
(Some of them from Kansas, some of them from Kansas.)

To be read or sung, well-nigh in a whisper.

Far away the Rachel-Jane
Not defeated by the horns
Sings amid a hedge of thorns:—
"*Love and life,*
Eternal youth—
Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet,

Dew and glory,
Love and truth,
Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet."

Louder and louder, faster and faster.

WHILE SMOKE-BLACK FREIGHTS ON THE DOUBLE-TRACKED RAILROAD,
DRIVEN AS THOUGH BY THE FOUL FIEND'S OX-GOAD,
SCREAMING TO THE WEST COAST, SCREAMING TO THE EAST,
CARRY OFF A HARVEST, BRING BACK A FEAST,
HARVESTING MACHINERY AND HARNESS FOR THE BEAST
THE HAND-CARS WHIZ AND RATTLE ON THE RAILS,
THE SUNLIGHT FLASHES ON THE TIN DINNER-PAILS.

In a rolling bass, with increasing deliberation

And then, in an instant,
Ye modern men,
Behold the procession once again,
Listen to the iron-horns, ripping, racking,
Listen to the *wise*-horn, desperate-to-*advise* horn,

With a snapping explosiveness.

Listen to the *fast*-horn, *kill*-horn, *blast*-horn . . . .

To be sung or read well-nigh in a whisper.

Far away the Rachel-Jane
Not defeated by the horns
Sings amid a hedge of thorns:—
"*Love and life,*
Eternal youth,
Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet,
Dew and glory,
Love and truth,
Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet."

The mufflers open on a score of cars
With wonderful thunder,
CRACK, CRACK, CRACK,
CRACK-CRACK, CRACK-CRACK,
CRACK, CRACK, CRACK,
Listen to the gold-horn . . .
Old-horn . . .
Cold-horn . . .
And all of the tunes, till the night comes down
On hay-stack, and ant-hill, and wind-bitten town.

To be brawled in the beginning with a snapping explosiveness, ending in a languorous chant.

Then far in the west, as in the beginning,
Dim in the distance, sweet in retreating,
Hark to the faint-horn, quaint-horn, saint-horn,
Hark to the calm-horn, balm-horn, psalm-horn. . . .

To be sung to exactly the same whispered tune as the first five lines.

They are hunting the goals that they understand:—
San Francisco and the brown sea-sand.
My goal is the mystery the beggars win.
I am caught in the web the night-winds spin.
The edge of the wheat-ridge speaks to me.
I talk with the leaves of the mulberry tree.
And now I hear, as I sit all alone
In the dusk, by another big Santa-Fé stone,
The souls of the tall corn gathering round
And the gay little souls of the grass in the ground.
Listen to the tale the cottonwood tells.
Listen to the windmills; singing o'er the wells.
Listen to the whistling flutes without price

This section beginning sonorously, ending in a languorous whisper.

Of myriad prophets out of paradise
Harken to the wonder
That the night-air carries. . . .
Listen . . . to . . . the . . . whisper
. . .
Of . . . the . . . prairie . . . fairies
Singing o'er the fairy plain:—
"*Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet.*
Love and glory,
Stars and rain,
Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet . . . ."

To the same
whispered tune
as the Rachel-
Jane song—
but very slowly.

Vachel Lindsay

THE LEADEN-EYED

Let not young souls be smothered out before
They do quaint deeds and fully flaunt their pride.
It is the world's one crime its babes grow dull,
Its poor are ox-like, limp, and leaden-eyed.

Not that they starve, but starve so dreamlessly,
Not that they sow, but that they seldom reap,
Not that they serve, but have no gods to serve,
Not that they die, but that they die like sheep.

Vachel Lindsay

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THE IMAGISTS

Amy Lowell (1874-1925)

PATTERNS

I walk down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern, as I wander down
The garden paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only whale-bone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.

And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain

Comes down the garden paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick she cannot see her lover hiding,
But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.
What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground,
All the pink and silver crumpled up on the ground.

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword hilt and the buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon—
I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun sifts through the shade.
Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the Duke.

"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment.
No, no answer."
And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,
Each one.
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown.
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern;
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady,
On this shady seat.
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing.
And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils

Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown.
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are patterns for?

Amy Lowell

SPRING DAY

Bath

The day is fresh-washed and fair, and there is a smell of tulips and narcissus in the air.

The sunshine pours in at the bath-room window and bores through the water in the bath-tub in lathes and planes of greenish-white. It cleaves the water into flaws like a jewel, and cracks it to bright light.

Little spots of sunshine lie on the surface of the water and dance, dance, and their reflections wobble deliciously over the ceiling; a stir of my finger sets them whirring, reeling. I move a foot, and the planes of light in the water jar. I lie back and laugh, and let the green-white water, the sun-flawed beryl water, flow over me. The day is almost too bright to bear, the green water covers me from the too bright day. I will lie here awhile and play with the water and the sun spots.

The sky is blue and high. A crow flaps by the window, and there is a whiff of tulips and narcissus in the air.

BREAKFAST TABLE

In the fresh-washed sunlight, the breakfast table is decked and white. It offers itself in flat surrender, tendering tastes, and smells, and colors, and metals, and grains, and the white cloth falls over its side, draped and wide. Wheels of white glitter in the silver coffee-pot, hot and spinning like catherine-wheels, they whirl, and twirl—and my eyes begin to smart, the little white, dazzling wheels prick them like darts. Placid and peaceful, the rolls of bread spread themselves in the sun to bask. A stack of butter-pats, pyramidal, shout orange through the white, scream, flutter, call: "Yellow! Yellow! Yellow!" Coffee steam rises in a stream, clouds the silver tea-service with mist, and twists up into the sunlight, revolved, involuted, suspiring higher and higher, fluting in a thin spiral up the high blue sky. A crow flies by and croaks at the coffee steam. The day is new and fair with good smells in the air.

WALK

Over the street the white clouds meet, and sheer away without touching.

On the sidewalks, boys are playing marbles. Glass marbles, with amber and blue hearts, roll together and part with a sweet clashing noise. The boys strike them with black and red striped agates. The glass marbles spit crimson when they are hit, and slip into the gutters under rushing brown water. I smell tulips and narcissus in the air, but there are no flowers anywhere, only white dust whipping up the street, and a girl with a gay Spring hat and blowing skirts. The dust and the wind flirt at her ankles and her neat, high-heeled patent leather shoes. Tap, tap, the little heels pat the pavement, and the wind rustles among the flowers on her hat.

A water-cart crawls slowly on the other side of the way. It is green and gay with new paint, and rumbles contentedly, sprinkling clear water over the white dust. Clear zigzagging water, which smells of tulips and narcissus.

The thickening branches make a pink *grisaille* against the blue sky.

Greyish background of a

Whoop! The clouds go dashing at each other and sheer away just in time. Whoop! And a man's hat careers down the street in front of the white dust, leaps into the branches of a tree, veers away and trundles ahead of the wind, jarring the sunlight into spokes of rose-color and green.

A motor-car cuts a swathe through the bright air, sharp-beaked, irresistible, shouting to the wind to make way. A glare of dust and sunshine tosses together behind it, and settles down. The sky is quiet and high, and the morning is fair with fresh-washed air.

MIDDAY AND AFTERNOON

Swirl of crowded streets. Shock and recoil of traffic. The stock-still brick façade of an old church, against which the waves of people lurch and withdraw. Flare of sunshine down side-streets. Eddies of light in the windows of chemists' shops, with their blue, gold, purple jars, darting colors far into the crowd. Loud bangs and tremors, murmurings out of high windows, whirring of machine belts, blurring of horses and motors. A quick spin and a shudder of brakes on an electric car, and the jar of a church-bell knocking against the metal blue of the sky. I am a piece of the town, a bit of blown dust, thrust along with the crowd. Proud to feel the pavement under me, reeling with feet. Feet tripping, skipping, lagging, dragging, plodding doggedly, or springing up and advancing on firm elastic insteps. A boy is selling papers; I smell them clean and new from the press. They are fresh like the air, and pungent as tulips and narcissus.

The blue sky pales to lemon, and great tongues of gold blind the shop-windows, putting out their contents in a flood of flame.

NIGHT AND SLEEP

The day takes her ease in slippered yellow. Electric signs gleam out along the shop fronts, following each other. They grow, and grow, and blow into patterns of fire-flowers as the sky fades. Trades scream in spots of light at the unruffled night. Twinkle, jab, snap, that means a new play; and over the way: plop, drop, quiver, is the sidelong sliver of a watchmaker's sign with its length on another street. A gigantic mug of beer effervesces to the atmosphere over a tall building, but the sky is high and has her own stars, why should she heed ours?

I leave the city with speed. Wheels whirl to take me back to my trees and my quietness. The breeze which blows with me is fresh-washed and clean, it has come but recently from the high sky. There are no flowers in bloom yet, but the earth of my garden smells of tulips and narcissus.

My room is tranquil and friendly. Out of the window I can see the distant city, a band of twinkling gems, little flower-heads with no stems. I cannot see the beer-glass, nor the letters of the restaurants and shops I passed; now the signs blur and all together make the city, glowing on a night of fine weather, like a garden stirring and blowing for the Spring.

The night is fresh-washed and fair and there is a whiff of flowers in the air.

Wrap me close, sheets of lavender. Pour your blue and purple dreams into my ears. The breeze whispers at the shutters and mutters queer tales of old days, and cobbled streets, and youths leaping their horses down marble stairways. Pale blue lavender, you are the color of the sky when it is fresh-washed and fair . . . I smell the stars . . . they are like tulips and narcissus . . . I smell them in the air.

Amy Lowell

THE GARDEN BY MOONLIGHT

A black cat among roses,
Phlox, lilac-misted under a first-quarter moon,
The sweet smells of heliotrope and night-scented stock.
The garden is very still,
It is dazed with moonlight,
Contented with perfume,
Dreaming the opium dreams of its folded poppies.
Firefly lights open and vanish
High as the tip buds of the golden glow
Low as the sweet alyssum flowers at my feet.
Moon-shimmer on leaves and trellises,
Moon-spikes shafting through the snow-ball bush.

Only the little faces of the ladies' delight are alert and
staring,
Only the cat, padding between the roses,
Shakes a branch and breaks the chequered pattern
As water is broken by the falling of a leaf.
Then you come.
And you are quiet like the garden,
And white like the alyssum flowers,
And beautiful as the silent sparks of the fireflies.
Ah, Beloved, do you see those orange lilies?
They knew my mother,
But who belonging to me will they know
When I am gone?

Amy Lowell

A LADY

You are beautiful and faded,
Like an old opera tune
Played upon a harpsichord;
Or like the sun-flooded silks
Of an eighteenth-century boudoir.
In your eyes

Smoulder the fallen roses of outlived minutes,
And the perfume of your soul
Is vague and suffusing,
With the pungence of sealed spice jars.
Your half-tones delight me,
And I grow mad with gazing
At your blent colors.

My vigor is a new-minted penny,
Which I cast at your feet.
Gather it up from the dust,
That its sparkle may amuse you.

Amy Lowell

A DECADE

When you came, you were like red wine and honey,
And the taste of you burnt my mouth with its sweetness.
Now you are like morning bread,
Smooth and pleasant,
I hardly taste you at all, for I know your savor,
But I am completely nourished.

Amy Lowell

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John Gould Fletcher (1886—)

IRRADIATION V

Over the roof-tops race the shadows of clouds;
Like horses the shadows of clouds charge down the street.

Whirlpools of purple and gold,
Winds from the mountains of Cinnabar,
Lacquered mandarin moments, palanquins swaying and balancing
Amid the vermilion pavilions, against the jade balustrades;
Glint of the glittering wings of dragon-flies in the light:
Silver filaments, golden flakes settling downwards,
Rippling, quivering flutters; repulse and surrender,
The sun broidered upon the rain,
The rain rustling with the sun.

Over the roof-tops race the shadows of clouds;
Like horses the shadows of clouds charge down the street

John Gould Fletcher

MEXICAN QUARTER

By an alley lined with tumble-down shacks,
And street-lamps askew, half-sputtering,
Feebly glimmering on gutters choked with filth, and dogs
Scratching their mangy backs,
Half-naked children are running about,
Women puff cigarettes in black doorways,
Crickets are crying;
Men slouch sullenly
Into the shadows.
Behind a hedge of cactus,
The smell of a dead horse
Mingles with the smell of tamales frying.

And a girl in a black lace shawl
Sits in a rickety chair by the square of unglazed window,
And sees the explosion of the stars
Fiercely poised on the velvet sky.
And she seems humming to herself:
"Stars, if I could reach you
(You are so very clear that it seems as if I could reach you)
I would give you all to the Madonna's image
On the gray plastered altar behind the paper flowers,
So that Juan would come back to me,
And we could live again those lazy burning hours,
Forgetting the tap of my fan and my sharp words.
And I would only keep four of you—
Those two blue-white ones overhead
To put in my ears,
And those two orange ones yonder
To fasten on my shoe-buckles."

A little further along the street
A man squats stringing a brown guitar.
The smoke of his cigarette curls round his hair,
And he, too, is humming, but other words:
"Think not that at your window I wait.
New love is better, the old is turned to hate.
Fate! Fate! All things pass away;
Life is forever, youth is but for a day.
Love again if you may,
Before the golden moons are blown out of the sky
And the crickets die.
Babylon and Samarkand
Are mud walls in a waste of sand."

John Gould Fletcher

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H. D. (Hilda Doolittle) (1886—)

OREAD

Whirl up, sea—
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.

H. D.

PEAR TREE

Silver dust
lifted from the earth,
higher than my arms reach,
you have mounted,
O silver,
higher than my arms reach
you front us with great mass;

no flower ever opened
so staunch a white leaf,
no flower ever parted silver
from such rare silver;

O white pear,
your flower-tufts
thick on the branch
bring summer and ripe fruits
in their purple hearts.

H. D.

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ORCHARD

I saw the first pear
as it fell—
the honey-seeking, golden-banded,
the yellow swarm
was not more fleet than I,
(spare us from loveliness)
and I fell prostrate
crying:

you have flayed us
with your blossoms,
spare us the beauty
of fruit-trees.

The honey-seeking
paused not,
the air thundered their song,
and I alone was prostrate.

O rough-hewn
god of the orchard,
I bring you an offering—
do you, alone unbeautiful,
son of the god,
spare us from loveliness:

these fallen hazel-nuts,
stripped late of their green sheaths,
grapes, red-purple,
their berries
dripping with wine,
pomegranates already broken,
and shrunken figs
and quinces untouched,
I bring you as offering.

H. D.

LETHE (River

Nor skin nor hide nor fleece
    Shall cover you,
Nor curtain of crimson nor fine
Shelter of cedar-wood be over you,
    Nor the fir-tree
    Nor the pine.

Nor sight of whin nor gorse
    Nor river-yew,
Nor fragrance of flowering bush,
Nor wailing of reed-bird to waken you,
    Nor of linnet,
    Nor of thrush.

Nor word nor touch nor sight
    Of lover, you
Shall long through the night but for this:
The roll of the full tide to cover you
    Without question,
    Without kiss.

H. D.

Lyre

composer [illegible] poetry [illegible] at [illegible] mt. to swim [illegible] [illegible] stream dive stand walk

Harriet Monroe (1860—)

THE WATER OUZEL

Little brown surf-bather of the mountains!
Spirit of foam, lover of cataracts, shaking your wings in
falling waters!
Have you no fear of the roar and rush
when Nevada plunges—
Nevada, the shapely dancer, feeling her way with slim
white fingers?
How dare you dash at Yosemite the mighty—
Tall, white-limbed Yosemite, leaping down, down, over the
cliff? 2526 f
Is it not enough to lean on the blue air of mountains?
Is it not enough to rest with your mate at timber-line,
in bushes that hug the rocks?
Must you fly through mad waters
where the heaped-up granite breaks them?
Must you batter your wings in the torrent?
Must you plunge for life or death through the foam?

Harriet Monroe

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THE TELEPHONE

Your voice, beloved, on the living wire,
Borne to me by the spirit powerful
Who binds the atoms and leaps out to pull
Great suns together! Ah, what magic lyre,
Strung for God's fingers, sound to my desire
The little words immortal, wonderful,
That all the separating miles annul
And touch my spirit with your kiss of fire!

What house of dreams do we inhabit—yea,
What brave enchanted palace is our home,
Green-curtained, lit with cresset stars aglow,
If thus it windows gardens far away,
Groves inaccessible whence voices come
That soft in the ear call where we may not go!

Harriet Monroe

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THE BLUE RIDGE

Still and calm,
In purple robes of kings,
The low-lying mountains sleep at the edge of
    the world.
The forests cover them like mantles;
Day and night
Rise and fall over them like the wash of waves.

Asleep, they reign.
Silent, they say all.
Hush me, O slumbering mountains—
Send me dreams.

Harriet Monroe

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George Sterling (1869–1926)

THE BLACK VULTURE

Aloof upon the day's immeasured dome,
He holds unshared the silence of the sky.
Far down his bleak, relentless eyes, descry
The eagle's empire and the falcon's home—
Far down, the galleons of sunset roam;
His hazards on the sea of morning lie;
Serene, he hears the broken tempest sigh
Where cold sierras gleam like scattered foam.

And least of all he holds the human swarm—
Unwitting now that envious men prepare
To make their dream and its fulfilment one,
When, poised above the caldrons of the storm,
Their hearts, contemptuous of death, shall dare
His roads between the thunder and the sun.

George Sterling

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ALDEBERAN AT DUSK

Thou art the star for which all evening waits—
O star of peace, come tenderly and soon!
Nor heed the drowsy and enchanted moon,
Who dreams in silver at the eastern gates
Ere yet she brim with light the blue estates
Abandoned by the eagles of the noon.
But shine thou swiftly on the darkling dune
And woodlands where the twilight hesitates.

Above that wide and ruby lake to-west
Wherein the sunset waits reluctantly,
Stir silently the purple wings of Night.

She stands afar, upholding to her breast,
As mighty murmurs reach her from the sea,
Thy lone and everlasting rose of light.

George Sterling

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SILENCE

[illegible]

Faint is the sea's voice for so vast a thing,
And weak the thunder of the enormous sky;
The hurricane has but a feeble cry;
Only with torrents may the mountains sing.
But though a murmur come from sky and sea,
The mightier things touch not a mortal ear;
And who is he that turns from time to hear
The huge vibration of Eternity?

For in the void essential silence broods
On the great shadow of the magnitudes
That house immutable oblivion.
What star has challenged? Who has known the sound
Of earth's progression on the cold profound?
The vast is voiceless. Who shall hear the sun?

George Sterling

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Ridgely Torrence (1875—)

THE SON

SOUTHERN OHIO MARKET TOWN

I heard an old farm-wife,
  Selling some barley,
Mingle her life with life
  And the name "Charley."

Saying: "The crop's all in,
  We're about through now;
Long nights will soon begin,
  We're just us two now.

"Twelve bushels at sixty cents,
  It's all I carried—
He sickened making fence;
  He was to be married—

"It feels like frost was near—
  His hair was curly.
The spring was late that year,
  But the harvest early."

Ridgely Torrence

From *Hesperides* by Ridgely Torrence. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publishers.

William Ellery Leonard (1876—)

LET THE PAST DIE

You tell me (you in life and books well read):
"Let your Past die with all its grief and riot."
Let the Past die!—The past is never dead!
Not at high noon! Not in the starry quiet!
My Past is gesturing in this limp you pity,
And whitens in this scar against the blast,
And not a tree, a book, a song, a city,
But has today its meaning from my Past.
There is, good friends, scant wisdom in this "letting."
I *am* my Past so long as I am I;
And in a brave reshaping, not forgetting,
Is my one hope and action not to die;
The Past that might have killed me if it could
I sternly mold to art and hardihood.

William Ellery Leonard

I FEEL ME NEAR TO SOME HIGH THING

I feel me near to some High Thing
  That earth awaits from me,
But cannot find in all my journeying
  What it may be.

I get no hint from hall or street,
  From forest, hill, or plain,
Save now a sudden quickening of my feet,
  Now some wild pain.

I only feel it should be done,
  As something great and true,
And that my hands could build it in the sun,
  If I but knew.

William Ellery Leonard

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Adelaide Crapsey (1878–1914)

NOVEMBER NIGHT

Listen . . .
With faint dry sound,
Like steps of passing ghosts,
The leaves, frost-crisp'd, break from the trees
And fall.

Adelaide Crapsey

TRIAD

These be
Three silent things:
The falling snow . . . the hour
Before the dawn . . . the mouth of one
Just dead.

Adelaide Crapsey

THE WARNING

Just now,
Out of the strange
Still dusk . . . as strange, as still . . .
A white moth flew. Why am I grown
So cold?

Adelaide Crapsey

SONG

I make my shroud, but no one knows—
So shimmering fine it is and fair,
With stitches set in even rows.
I make my shroud, but no one knows.

In door-way where the lilac blows,
Humming a little wandering air,
I make my shroud and no one knows,
So shimmering fine it is and fair.

Adelaide Crapsey

DIRGE

Never the nightingale,
O my dear,
Never again the lark
Thou wilt hear;
Though dusk and the morning still
Tap at thy window-sill,
Though ever love call and call,
Thou wilt not hear at all,
My dear, my dear.

Adelaide Crapsey

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Karle Wilson Baker (1878—)

GOOD COMPANY

Today I have grown taller from walking with the trees,
The seven sister-poplars who go softly in a line;
And I think my heart is whiter for its parley with a star
That trembled out at nightfall and hung above the pine.

The call-note of a redbird from the cedars in the dusk
Woke his happy mate within me to an answer free and fine;
And a sudden angel beckoned from a column of blue smoke—
Lord, who am I that they should stoop—these holy folk of thine?

Karle Wilson Baker

From *Blue Smoke.* Reprinted by permission of the author and her publishers, the Yale University Press.

WINTER FLOWERS

At the door of my kitchen I feed my flowers:
My pigeons the silvery lilies that sweep
Over the garden the frost has slain,
Wild as beauty, and soft as sleep.

My flowers bloom up over the chimney and stack,
Blue smoke-irises, bodiless things,
Orchids of pearl that I could not reach
Except that my hunger and thirst have wings.

And then, when my flowers of light have gone,
Vanished and gone as a shadow goes,
I kneel by the hearth in a little house,
And warm my heart at a burning rose.

Karle Wilson Baker

From *The Burning Bush.* Reprinted by permission of the author and her publishers, the Yale University Press.

John G. Neihardt (1881—)

WHEN I AM DEAD

When I am dead and nervous hands have thrust
My body downward into careless dust;
I think the grave cannot suffice to hold
My spirit 'prisoned in the sunless mould!
Some subtle memory of you shall be
A resurrection of the life of me.
Yea, I shall be, because I love you so,
The speechless spirit of all things that grow.
You shall not touch a flower but it shall be
Like a caress upon the cheek of me.
I shall be patient in the common grass
That I may feel your footfall when you pass.
I shall be kind as rain and pure as dew,
A loving spirit 'round the life of you.
When your soft cheeks by perfumed winds are fanned,
'Twill be my kiss—and you will understand.
But when some sultry, storm-bleared sun has set,
I will be lightning if you dare forget!

John G. Neihardt

BATTLE-CRY

More than half beaten, but fearless,
Facing the storm and the night;
Breathless and reeling, but tearless,
Here in the lull of the fight,
I who bow not but before Thee,
God of the fighting Clan,
Lifting my fists I implore Thee,
Give me the heart of a Man!

What though I live with the winners
Or perish with those who fall?
Only the cowards are sinners,
Fighting the fight is all.
Strong is my Foe—he advances!
Snapt is my blade, O Lord!
See the proud banners and lances!
Oh spare me this stub of a sword!

Give me no pity, nor spare me;
Calm not the wrath of my Foe.
See where he beckons to dare me!
Bleeding, half beaten—I go.
Not for the glory of winning,
Not for the fear of the night;
Shunning the battle is sinning—
Oh spare me the heart to fight!

Red is the mist about me;
Deep is the wound in my side;
"Coward" thou criest to flout me?
O terrible Foe, thou hast lied!
Here with my battle before me,
God of the fighting Clan,
Grant that the woman who bore me
Suffered to suckle a man!

John G. Neihardt

The poems "When I am Dead" and "Battle-Cry" are from *The Quest* by John G. Neihardt. Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

Arthur Davison Ficke (1883—)

BEAUTY

Beauty—what is it? A perfume without name;
A sudden hush where clamor was before;
Across the darkness a faint ghost of flame;
A far sail, seen from a deserted shore.
Out of the dust and terror it can spring
And be, for us, all that there never was;
The sun lives only to illume Her wing,
Which rises, hovers, soars, and soon must pass
Into high chaos once again. But now
While She still lingers round us in mad flight,
We shall revive the vigor of our vow,
Assured that all our hopeless love was right,
And watch the wings that fade, and pale, and are gone,
Knowing that they are life, and they alone.

Arthur Davison Ficke

DON QUIXOTE

Dearest of all the heroes! Peerless knight
Whose follies sprang from such a generous blood!
Young, young must be the heart that in thy fight
Beholds no trace of its own servitude.
Young, or else darkened, is the eye that sees
No image of its own fate in thy quest.
The windmills and the swine—by such as these
Is shaped the doom of those we love the best.
Belovèd knight! La Mancha's windows gleam,
Across the plain time makes so chill and grey,
With thy light only. Still thy flambeaux stream
In pomp of one who on his destined day
Put up his spear, his kindly pennon furled,
And died of the unworthiness of the world.

Arthur Davison Ficke

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Sara Teasdale (1884—)

BARTER

Life has loveliness to sell,
  All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
  Soaring fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

Life has loveliness to sell
  Music like a curve of gold,
Scent of pine trees in the rain,
  Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Holy thoughts that star the night.

Spend all you have for loveliness,
  Buy it and never count the cost;
For one white singing hour of peace
  Count many a year of strife well lost,
And for a breath of ecstasy
Give all you have been or could be.

Sara Teasdale

From *Love Songs*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

SWALLOW FLIGHT

I love my hour of wind and light,
  I love men's faces and their eyes,
I love my spirit's veering flight
  Like swallows under evening skies.

Sara Teasdale

From *Rivers to the Sea*. Copyright, 1915, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

John Hall Wheelock (1886—)

THE BLACK PANTHER

There is a panther caged within my breast. a
  But what his name there is no breast shall know b
  Save mine, nor what it is that drives him so, b
Backward and forward, in relentless quest; a
That silent rage, baffled but unsuppressed,
  The soft pad of those stealthy feet that go b
  Over my body's prison to and fro, b
Trying the walls forever without rest. a

All day I feed him with my living heart, a
  But when the night puts forth her dreams and stars, b
    The inexorable Frenzy reawakes; c
  His wrath is hurled upon the trembling bars, b
The eternal passion stretches me apart— a
    And I lie silent, but my body shakes. c

John Hall Wheelock

From *Black Panther*. Copyright, 1922, by Charles Scribner's Sons. By permission of the publishers.

THE WOVEN DOOM

We are all woven of the one weaving,
  Flower and bird and beast and tree—
The gray kingfisher and the trout,
The toad that spreads a tiny hand
  On the earth's carpet quietly—
Heaven shaken with storm and thunder,
Clouds and great waters, wind and snows,
The starry firmament, the grieving
  Heart of man; through earth and sea,
The moth, the tiger, and the rose,

Flower and planet, strand on strand
The wandering threads wind in and out,
With warp and woof, over and under,
Weaving the ancient unity.

We are all woven in one Story,
One Legend like a sorrow runs
Through creeds and crowns and buried wars,
Prophets and saviors crucified,
Great fortresses, and cities, once
Crowded, now crumbled and forsaken,
Captains and kings of old that spread
Their sails upon the sea; one Glory
Speaks through them all, through swords and guns,
Battles and dreams and hearts that bled,
Lovers, or rulers in their pride —
Desolate lands, and the lone stars
That by the wind of Time are shaken,
And thronging worlds and flaming suns.

We are all passing on together
In darkness to the end unknown,
Through all the ways and days of earth:
The thief, the ploughman, and the seer,
The dog, the emperor on his throne,
The eyes bowed over eyes unseeing,
The dying face, the broken heart,
To the one end are moving, whether
Evil or good — but not alone.
Each in the other has a part.
Each as he may, in hope or fear,
Love, lust, or labor, death or birth,
Works out the will of the One Being —
For One is all, and all are One.

John Hall Wheelock

Reprinted from *The Southwest Review*, October 1926, by permission of the author and the editor of *The Southwest Review*.

William Rose Benét (1886—)

NIGHT

Let the night keep
What the night takes,
Sighs buried deep,
Ancient heart-aches,
Groans of the lover,
Tears of the lost;
Let day discover not
All the night cost!

Let the night keep
Love's burning bliss,
Drowned in deep sleep
Whisper and kiss,
Thoughts like white flowers
In hedges of May;
Let such deep hours not
Fade with the day!

Monarch is night
Of all eldest things,
Pain and affright,
Rapturous wings;
Night the crown, night the sword
Lifted to smite.
Kneel to your overlord,
Children of night!

William Rose Benét

From *Moons of Grandeur* by William Rose Benét. Copyright, 1920. George H. Doran Company, publishers.

Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)

TREES

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks to God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair,

Upon whose bosom snow has lain,
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer

EASTER

The air is like a butterfly
  With frail blue wings.
The happy earth looks at the sky
  And sings.

Joyce Kilmer

The poems "Trees" and "Easter" are from *Trees and Other Poems* by Joyce Kilmer. Copyright, 1914. George H. Doran Company, publishers.

Elinor Wylie (1887—)

VELVET SHOES

Let us walk in the white snow
  In a soundless space;
With footsteps quiet and slow,
  At a tranquil pace,
  Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,
  And you in wool,
White as a white cow's milk,
  More beautiful
  Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town
  In a windless peace;
We shall step upon white down,
  Upon silver fleece,
  Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes:
  Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dews
  On white silence below.
  We shall walk in the snow.

Elinor Wylie

From *Nets to Catch the Wind* by Elinor Wylie. Copyright, 1921, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

THE EAGLE AND THE MOLE

Avoid the reeking herd,
Shun the polluted flock,
Live like that stoic bird, emotionless
The eagle of the rock.

The huddled warmth of crowds
Begets and fosters hate;
He keeps, above the clouds,
His cliff inviolate.

When flocks are folded warm,
And herds to shelter run,
He sails above the storm,
He stares into the sun.

If in the eagle's track
Your sinews cannot leap,
Avoid the lathered pack,
Turn from the steaming sheep.

If you would keep your soul
From spotted sight or sound,
Live like the velvet mole;
Go burrow underground.

And there hold intercourse
With roots of trees and stones,
With rivers at their source,
And disembodied bones.

Elinor Wylie

From *Nets to Catch the Wind* by Elinor Wylie. Copyright, 1921, by Harcourt Brace and Company, Inc.

Moffett

AMY
LOWELL

Nicholas Muray

ELINOR
WYLIE

EMILY
DICKINSON

Kishkin

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

After a portrait by Eric Pape

SARA TEASDALE

WOMEN POETS

Helen Hoyt (1887—)

ELLIS PARK

Little park that I pass through,
I carry off a piece of you
Every morning hurrying down
To my work-day in the town;
Carry you for country there
To make the city ways more fair.
I take your trees,
And your breeze,
Your greenness,
Your cleanness,
Some of your shade, some of your sky,
Some of your calm as I go by;
Your flowers to trim
The pavements grim;

Your space for room in the jostled street,
And grass for carpet to my feet;
Your fountains take and sweet bird calls
To sing me from my office walls.
All that I can see
I carry off with me.
But you never miss my theft,
So much treasure you have left.
As I find you, fresh at morning,
So I find you, home returning—
Nothing lacking from your grace.
All your riches wait in place
For me to borrow
On the morrow.

Do you hear this praise of you,
Little park that I pass through?

Helen Hoyt

THE SENSE OF DEATH

Since I have felt the sense of death,
Since I have borne its dread, its fear—
Oh, how my life has grown more dear
Since I have felt the sense of death!
Sorrows are good, and cares are small,
Since I have felt the sense of death.

Since I have felt the sense of death,
And death forever at my side—
Oh, how the world has opened wide
Since I have felt the sense of death!
My hours are jewels that I spend,
For I have seen the hours end.

Since I have felt the sense of death,
Since I have looked on that black night—
My inmost brain is fierce with light
Since I have felt the sense of death.
O dark, that made my eyes to see!
O death, that gave my life to me!

Helen Hoyt

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Alan Seeger (1888-1916)

I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger

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Hervey Allen (1889—)

SOLDIER-POET

I think at first like us he did not see
The goal to which the screaming eagles flew;
For romance lured him, France, and chivalry;
But Oh! Before the end he knew, he knew!
And gave his first full love to Liberty,
And met her face to face one lurid night
While the guns boomed their shuddering minstrelsy
And all the Argonne glowed with demon light.
And Liberty herself came through the wood,
And with her dear boy lover kept the tryst;
Clasped in her grand Greek arms he understood
Whose were the fatal lips that he had kissed—
Lips that the soul of Youth has loved from old—
Hot lips of Liberty that kiss men cold.

Hervey Allen

From *Wampum and Old Gold*, published by the Yale University Press. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher.

Conrad Aiken (1889—)

MUSIC I HEARD

Music I heard with you was more than music,
And bread I broke with you was more than bread;
Now that I am without you, all is desolate;
All that was once so beautiful is dead.

Your hands once touched this table and this silver,
And I have seen your fingers hold this glass.
These things do not remember you, belovèd—
And yet your touch upon them will not pass.

For it was in my heart you moved among them,
And blessed them with your hands and with your
eyes;
And in my heart they will remember always—
They knew you once, O beautiful and wise.

Conrad Aiken

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VARIATION VI

You are as beautiful as white clouds
Flowing among bright stars at night;
You are as beautiful as pale clouds
Which the moon sets alight.

You are as lovely as golden stars
Which white clouds try to brush away;
You are as bright as golden stars
When they come out to play.

You are as glittering as those stairs
Of stone down which the blue brooks run;
You are as shining as sea-waves
All hastening to the sun.

VARIATION VII

Red leaf, red leaf, falling to float
  On the blue water among the cold clouds . . . .
If I were a child I would call you a boat
  And sail to the moon . . . .

I would sail to the moon with the dark king's daughter,
  The beautiful dreamer with green-slippered feet;
Her long golden hair would shine on the water;
  Her eyes would be blue;

And there she would sing, while the sail overhead
  Swelled with the wind, and the green waves flashed —
Her red lips would sing, till the isle of the dead
  Rose darkly before us.

Conrad Aiken

From *The Charnal Rose* by Conrad Aiken. Published by The Four Seas Company.

Robert Nathan (1894—)

AT THE SYMPHONY

The cellos, setting forth apart,
Grumbled and sang, and so the day
From the low beaches of my heart
Turned in tranquillity away.

And over weariness and doubt
Rose up the horns like bellied sails,
Like canvas of the soul flung out
To rising and orchestral gales;

Passed on and left irresolute
The ebony, the silver throat;
Low over clarinet and flute
Hung heaven upon a single note.

Robert Nathan

THE POET SINGS TO HIMSELF

3 ess
p.

Love is the first thing.
Love goes past.
Sorrow is the next thing;
Quiet is the last.

Love is a good thing,
Quiet isn't bad;
But sorrow is the best thing
I've ever had.

Robert Nathan

The poems by Robert Nathan are reprinted from *Youth Grows Old*, by permission of the publishers, Robert M. McBride & Company. Copyright, 1922, by the publishers.

Christopher Morley (1890—)

AT THE MERMAID CAFETERIA

Truth is enough for prose:
Calmly it goes
To tell just what it knows.

For verse, skill will suffice—
Delicate, nice
Casting of verbal dice.

Poetry, men attain
By subtler pain
More flagrant in the brain—

An honesty unfeigned,
A heart unchained,
A madness well restrained.

Christopher Morley

TO A POST-OFFICE INKWELL

How many humble hearts have dipped
In you, and scrawled their manuscript!
Have shared their secrets, told their cares,
Their curious and quaint affairs!

Your pool of ink, your scratchy pen,
Have moved the lives of unborn men,
And watched young people, breathing hard,
Put Heaven on a postal card.

Christopher Morley

The poems "At the Mermaid Cafeteria" and "To a Post-Office Inkwell" are from *Chimneysmoke* by Christopher Morley. Copyright, 1921. George H. Doran Company, publishers.

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892—)

THE BALLAD OF THE HARP-WEAVER

"Son," said my mother,
When I was knee-high,
"You've need of clothes to cover you,
And not a rag have I.

"There's nothing in the house
To make a boy breeches,
Not shears to cut a cloth with
Nor thread to take stitches.

"There's nothing in the house
But a loaf-end of rye,
And a harp with a woman's head
Nobody will buy,"
And she began to cry.

That was in the early fall.
When came the late fall,
"Son," she said, "the sight of you
Makes your mother's blood crawl,—

"Little skinny shoulder-blades
Sticking through your clothes!
And where you'll get a jacket from
God above knows.

"It's lucky for me, lad,
Your daddy's in the ground,
And can't see the way I let
His son go around!"
And she made a queer sound.

That was in the late fall.
When the winter came,

I'd not a pair of breeches
Nor a shirt to my name.

I couldn't go to school,
Or out of doors to play.
And all the other little boys
Passed our way.

"Son," said my mother,
"Come, climb into my lap
And I'll chafe your little bones
While you take a nap."

And, oh, but we were silly
For half an hour or more,
Me with my long legs
Dragging on the floor,

A-rock-rock-rocking
To a mother-goose rhyme!
Oh, but we were happy
For half an hour's time!

But there was I, a great boy,
And what would folks say
To hear my mother singing me
To sleep all day,
In such a daft way?

Men say the winter
Was bad that year;
Fuel was scarce,
And food was dear.

A wind with a wolf's head
Howled about our door,

And we burned up the chairs
  And sat upon the floor.

All that was left us
  Was a chair we couldn't break,
And the harp with a woman's head
  Nobody would take,
  For song or pity's sake.

The night before Christmas
  I cried with the cold,
I cried myself to sleep
  Like a two-year-old.

And in the deep night
  I felt my mother rise,
And stare down upon me
  With love in her eyes.

I saw my mother sitting
  On the one good chair,
A light falling on her
  From I couldn't tell where,

Looking nineteen,
  And not a day older
And the harp with a woman's head
  Leaned against her shoulder.

Her thin fingers, moving
  In the thin, tall strings,
Were weav-weav-weaving
  Wonderful things.

Many bright threads,
  From where I couldn't see,

Were running through the harp-strings
  Rapidly,

And gold threads whistling
  Through my mother's hand.
I saw the web grow,
  And the pattern expand.

She wove a child's jacket,
  And when it was done
She laid it on the floor
  And wove another one.

She wove a red cloak
  So regal to see,
"She's made it for a king's son,"
  I said, "and not for me."
  But I knew it was for me.

She wove a pair of breeches
  Quicker than that!
She wove a pair of boots
  And a little cocked hat.

She wove a pair of mittens,
  She wove a little blouse,
She wove all night
  In the still, cold house.

She sang as she worked,
  And the harp-strings spoke:
Her voice never faltered,
  And the thread never broke.
  And when I awoke—

There sat my mother
  With the harp against her shoulder,

Looking nineteen
 And not a day older,

A smile about her lips,
 And a light about her head,
And her hands in the harp-strings
 Frozen dead.

And piled up beside her
 And toppling to the skies,
Were the clothes of a king's son.
 Just my size.

Edna St. Vincent Millay

EUCLID c. 300 B.C.

Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.
 Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,
 And lay them prone upon the earth and cease
To ponder on themselves, the while they stare
At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere
 In shapes of shifting lineage; let geese
 Gabble and hiss, but heroes seek release
From dusty bondage into luminous air.
O blinding hour, O holy, terrible day,
 When first the shaft into his vision shone
 Of light anatomized! Euclid alone
Has looked on Beauty bare. Fortunate they
Who, though once only and then but far away,
 Have heard her massive sandal set on stone.

Edna St. Vincent Millay

From *The Ballad of The Harp Weaver and Other Poems*, published by Harper & Brothers. Copyright, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

Hildegarde Flanner (1899—)

TO A TREE IN BLOOM

There is no silence lovelier than the one
That flowers upon a flowering tree at night.
There is no stillness known beneath the sun
That is so strange to bear, nor half so white.
If I had all that silence in my heart,
What yet unfinished heavens I could sing!
My words lift up and tremble to depart,
Then die in air, from too much uttering.
It must have been beneath a tree like this
An angel sought a girl in Galilee,
While she looked up and pondered how the kiss
Of God had come with wings and mystery.
It may be that a single petal fell,
Heavy with sorrow that it could not tell.

Hildegarde Flanner

From *A Tree in Bloom*, published by Gelber, Lillienthal Inc., San Francisco
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will [illegible]

Wallace Stevens (1879—)

[illegible]

ANECDOTE OF MEN BY THE THOUSAND

The soul, he said, is composed
Of the external world.

There are men of the East, he said,
Who are the East.
There are men of a province
Who are that province.
There are men of a valley
Who are that valley.

There are men whose words
Are as natural sounds
Of their places
As the cackle of toucans
In the place of toucans.

The mandoline is the instrument
Of a place.

Are there mandolines of western mountains?
Are there mandolines of northern moonlight?

The dress of a woman of Lhassa,
In its place,
Is an invisible element of that place
Made visible.

Wallace Stevens

SIX SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPES

I

An old man sits
In the shadow of a pine tree
In China.
He sees larkspur,
Blue and white,
At the edge of the shadow,
Move in the wind.
His beard moves in the wind.
The pine tree moves in the wind.
Thus water flows
Over weeds.

II

The night is of the color
Of a woman's arm:
Night, the female,
Obscure,
Fragrant and supple,
Conceals herself.
A pool shines
Like a bracelet
Shaken in a dance.

III

I measure myself
Against a tall tree.
I find that I am much taller,
For I reach right up to the sun,
With my eye;
And I reach to the shore of the sea
With my ear.
Nevertheless, I dislike
The way the ants crawl
In and out of my shadow.

IV

When my dream was near the moon,
The white folds of its gown
Filled with yellow light.
The soles of its feet
Grew red.
Its hair filled
With certain blue crystallizations
From stars,
Not far off.

V

Not all the knives of the lamp-posts,
Nor the chisels of the long streets,
Nor the mallets of the domes
And high towers,
Can carve
What one star can carve,
Shining through the grape-leaves.

VI

Rationalists, wearing square hats,
Think, in square rooms,
Looking at the floor,
Looking at the ceiling.
They confine themselves
To right-angled triangles.
If they tried rhomboids,
Cones, waving lines, ellipses—
As for example, the ellipse of the half-moon—
Rationalists would wear sombreros.

Wallace Stevens

The poems "Anecdote of Men by the Thousand" and "Six Significant Landscapes" are reprinted from *Harmonium* by Wallace Stevens, by permission of, and by special arrangement with, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., authorized publishers.

Alfred Kreymborg (1883—)

GLANCES

To My Mother

Dear pure gray eyes:
Your glance follows me
through my worst darknesses,
saves me from my worst selves,
almost.
It isn't your fault·
I ought to be the best of mortals.

Alfred Kreymborg

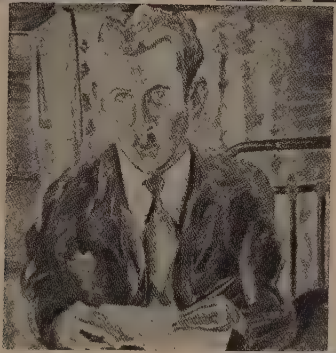
MISTERMAN KREYMBORG

My father's name was Kreymborg—
Hermann Kreymborg.
It isn't a pretty name.
It isn't a name one remembers.
How can you—
you've never heard it, read it before?
Seeing it now,
you'll call it unpronounceable,
German, Norwegian, Danish, Dutch,
or something—and let it go,
never find it in your memory . . .
It is so with us.
With most of us.

My father was a shopkeeper.
In the days of Indians,
he'd push a gaudily painted Indian on rollers
out in front of a morning
and roll it back of a night.
It was a tobacco shop.

ALFRED
KREYMBORG

EZRA
POUND



After a painting by the author

EDWARD
ESTLIN
CUMMINGS

WALLACE STEVENS

Charles Sheeler

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

EXPERIMENTERS

That was his life.
Hermann Kreymborg had five children.
(We'll only concern ourselves
with the fifth of the five just now.)
Being a man of some slight imagination,
along with the rest of him,
Kreymborg,
in approaching this fifth of the five,
said to his wife:
"Family names won't do.
We've tried them before.
Not without success.
But for this one
we must use something else."

He searched the telephone book,
a business directory,
advertisements in the newspapers,
signs over shops and on shop windows,
and finally, a dictionary of names.
He came upon Alfred.
He liked it,
pretty or no.

But he wasn't satisfied.
He craved some outside assurance.
Such was one twist of his nature,
he couldn't get away from pedigrees.
Alfred must have a pedigree
Not necessarily a Kreymborg pedigree.
But somebody's pedigree.

In his stumbling stuttering way,
Hermann Kreymborg
came upon King Alfred,
the Alfred who let the loaves burn,

but the Alfred who was a king—
of homespun.
So Hermann Kreymborg
whispered his wife:
"We will call it, Alfred."
And Alfred it was called . . .

Alfred Kreymborg has reached thirty-two
Somehow.
And somehow,
by some miracle, let us say,
a few of you—
notably
Lance Hartpence,
Billy Williams,
Skip Cannell,
Bogie Bodenheim,
Carl Sandburg—
know Alfred Kreymborg.
Kreymborg is glad . . .
Glad
that in knowing Alfred Kreymborg
you shall hear of Hermann Kreymborg,
glad
that with his sinews,
feeble or no,
he has
or may
or will
make you recall
the sinews
of Hermann Kreymborg—
the offspring give birth to the father

Edgar Lee Masters,
poet of the dead:

I commend your notice,
I challenge you
to see the living
Misterman Kreymborg
(who lies, I think,
such as there is of him,
in Woodlawn Cemetery)
through Alfred Kreymborg,
who soaks this
over,
around
and under
him.

Alfred Kreymborg

The poems "Glances" and "Misterman Kreymborg" are from *Mushrooms* by Alfred Kreymborg. Reprinted by permission of the author.

WHEN THE WILLOW NODS

Only when the willow nods
does the water nod;
only when the wind nods
does the water nod;
only when a cloud nods
does the wind nod;
and, of course, nod
rhymes with God.

Alfred Kreymborg

From the dance-play "When the Willow Nods," in *Puppet Plays*, published by Samuel French, New York. Reprinted by personal permission of the author.

William Carlos Williams (1883—)

PEACE ON EARTH

The Archer is awake!
The Swan is flying!
Gold against blue
An Arrow is lying.
There is hunting in heaven—
Sleep safe till tomorrow.

The Bears are abroad!
The Eagle is screaming!
Gold against blue
Their eyes are gleaming!
Sleep!
Sleep safe till tomorrow.

The Sisters lie
With their arms intertwining;
Gold against blue
Their hair is shining!
The Serpent writhes!
Orion is listening!
Gold against blue
His sword is glistening!
Sleep!
There is hunting in heaven—
Sleep safe till tomorrow.

William Carlos Williams

From *The Tempers* by William Carlos Williams. Published by The Four Seas Co

OVERTURE TO A DANCE OF LOCOMOTIVES

I

Men with picked voices chant the names
of cities in a huge gallery: promises
that pull through descending stairways
to a deep rumbling.
The rubbing feet
of those coming to be carried quicken a
grey pavement into soft light that rocks
to and fro, under the domed ceiling,
across and across from pale
earthcoloured walls of bare limestone.

Covertly the hands of a great clock
go round and round! Were they to
move quickly and at once the whole
secret would be out and the shuffling
of all ants be done forever.

A leaning pyramid of sunlight, narrowing
out at a high window, moves by the clock:
disaccordant hands straining out fron
a center: inevitable postures infinitely
repeated—

II

Two—twofour—twoeight!
Porters in red hats run on narrow platforms.
This way ma'm!
—important not to take
the wrong train!
Lights from the concrete
ceiling hang crooked but—
Poised horizontal
on glittering parallels the dingy cylinders
packed with a warm glow—inviting entry—

pull against the hour. But brakes can
hold a fixed posture till—
The whistle!

Not twoeight. Not twofour. Two!

Gliding windows. Colored cooks sweating
in a small kitchen. Taillights-

In time: twofour!
In time: twoeight!—

-rivers are tunneled: trestles
cross oozy swampland: wheels repeating
the same gesture remain relatively
stationary: rails forever parallel
return on themselves infinitely.
The dance is sure.

William Carlos Williams

From *Sour Grapes* by William Carlos Williams. Copyright, 1921, by The Four Seas Company.

Ezra Pound (1885—)

REVOLT AGAINST THE CREPUSCULAR SPIRIT OF MODERN POETRY

not clear

I would shake off the lethargy of this our time,
and give
For shadows—shapes of power.
For dreams—men.

"It is better to dream than do"?
Aye! and, No!
Aye! if we dream great deeds, strong men,
Hearts hot, thoughts mighty.

No! if we dream pale flowers,
Slow-moving pageantry of hours that languidly
Drop as o'er-ripened fruit from sallow trees;
If so, we live and die not life but dreams.
Great God, grant life in dreams.
Not dalliance, but life!

Let us be men that dream,
Not cowards, dabblers, waiters
For dead Time to reawaken and grant balm
For ills unnamed.

Great God, if we be damn'd to be not men but only
dreams,
Then let us be such dreams the world shall tremble at
And know we be its rulers though but dreams!
Then let us be such shadows as the world shall
tremble at
And know we be its masters though but shadows!

High God, if men are grown but pale sick phantoms
That must live only in these mists and tempered lights

And tremble for dim hours that knock o'er loud
Or tread too violent in passing them;
Great God, if these thy sons are grown such thin
    ephemerae,
I bid thee grapple chaos and beget
Some new titanic spawn to pile the hills and stir
This earth again.

Ezra Pound

CHI É QUESTA?

Who is she coming, that the roses bend
Their shameless heads to do her passing honor?
Who is she coming with a light upon her
Not born of suns that with the day's end end?
Say, is it Love who hath chosen the nobler part?
Say, is it Love, that was divinity,
Who hath left his godhead that his home might be
The shameless rose of her unclouded heart?

If this be Love, where hath he won such grace?
If this be Love, how is the evil wrought,
That all men write against his darkened name?
If this be Love, if this . . . .
        O mind give place!
What holy mystery e'er was noosed in thought?
Own that thou scan'st her not, nor count it shame!

Ezra Pound

PICCADILLY

Beautiful, tragical faces,
Ye that were whole, and are so sunken;
And, O ye vile, ye that might have been loved,
That are so sodden and drunken,
Who hath forgotten you?

O wistful, fragile faces, few out of many!

The gross, the coarse, the brazen,
God knows I cannot pity them, perhaps as
I should do.
But, oh, ye delicate, wistful faces,
Who hath forgotten you?

Ezra Pound

AN IMMORTALITY

Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.

Though I have been in many a land
There is naught else in living.

And I would rather have my sweet,
Though rose-leaves die of grieving,

Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men's believing.

Ezra Pound

The poems by Ezra Pound are reprinted here by permission of the publishers, Small, Maynard & Company.

Marianne Moore (1887—)

SILENCE

My father used to say,
"Superior people never make long visits,
have to be shown Longfellow's grave
nor the glass flowers at Harvard.
Self-reliant like the cat—
that takes its prey to privacy,
the mouse's limp tail hanging like a shoelace from its mouth—
they sometimes enjoy solitudes,
and can be robbed of speech
by speech which has delighted them.
The deepest feeling always shows itself in silence;
not in silence, but restraint."
Nor was he insincere in saying, "Make my house your inn!"
Inns are not residences.

Marianne Moore

TO BE LIKED BY YOU WOULD BE A CALAMITY

"Attack is more piquant than concord," but when
You tell me frankly you would like to feel
My flesh beneath your feet,
I'm all abroad; I can put my weapon up, and
Bow you out.

Gesticulation—it is half the language,
Let unsheathed gesticulation be the steel
Your courtesy must meet,
Since in your hearing words are mute, which to my senses
Are a shout.

Marianne Moore

The poems "Silence" and "To Be Liked by You Would Be a Calamity" are reprinted by permission of the author and her publisher, The Dial Publishing Company.

T. S. Eliot (1888—)

RHAPSODY ON A WINDY NIGHT

Twelve o'clock.
Along the reaches of the street
Held in a lunar synthesis,
Whispering lunar incantations
Dissolve the floors of memory
And all its clear relations,
Its divisions and precisions,
Every street lamp that I pass
Beats like a fatalistic drum,
And through the spaces of the dark
Midnight shakes the memory
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

Half-past one,
The street lamp sputtered,
The street lamp muttered,
The street lamp said, "Regard that woman
Who hesitates toward you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin.
You see the border of her dress
Is torn and stained with sand,
And you see the corner of her eye
Twists like a crooked pin."
The memory throws up high and dry
A crowd of twisted things;
A twisted branch upon the beach
Eaten smooth, and polished
As if the world gave up
The secret of its skeleton,
Stiff and white.
A broken spring in a factory yard,

Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left
Hard and curled and ready to snap.

Half-past two,
The street-lamp said,
"Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter,
Slips out its tongue
And devours a morsel of rancid butter."
So the hand of the child, automatic,
Slipped out and pocketed a toy that was running along the quay.
I could see nothing behind that child's eye.
I have seen eyes in the street
Trying to peer through lighted shutters,
And a crab one afternoon in a pool,
An old crab with barnacles on his back,
Gripped the end of a stick which I held him.

Half-past three,
The lamp sputtered,
The lamp muttered in the dark.
The lamp hummed:
"Regard the moon,
La lune ne garde aucune rancune,
She winks a feeble eye,
She smiles into corners.
She smooths the hair of the grass.
The moon has lost her memory.
A washed-out smallpox cracks her face,
Her hand twists a paper rose,
That smells of dust and old Cologne,
She is alone
With all the old nocturnal smells
That cross and cross across her brain.
The reminiscence comes

Of sunless, dry geraniums
And dust in crevices,
Smells of chestnuts in the streets,
And female smells in shuttered rooms,
And cigarettes in corridors
And cocktail smells in bars."

The lamp said,
"Four o'clock,
Here is the number on the door.
Memory!
You have the key,
The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair,
Mount.
The bed is open; the tooth-brush hangs on the wall,
Put your shoes at the door, sleep, prepare for life."

The last twist of the knife.

T. S. Eliot

PRELUDES

I

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

II

The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of beer
From the sawdust-trampled street
With all its muddy feet that press
To early coffee-stands.
With the other masquerades
That time resumes,
One thinks of all the hands
That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

III

You tossed a blanket from the bed,
You lay upon your back, and waited;
You dozed, and watched the night revealing
The thousand sordid images
Of which your soul was constituted;
They flickered against the ceiling.
And when all the world came back
And the light crept up between the shutters,
And you heard the sparrows in the gutters,
You had such a vision of the street
As the street hardly understands;
Sitting along the bed's edge, where
You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the yellow soles of feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.

IV

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes,
And evening newspapers, and eyes

Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

T. S. Eliot

COUSIN NANCY

Miss Nancy Ellicott
Strode across the hills and broke them,
Rode across the hills and broke them—
The barren New England hills—
Riding to hounds
Over the cow-pasture.

Miss Nancy Ellicott smoked
And danced all the modern dances;
And her aunts were not quite sure how they felt about it,
But they knew that it was modern.

Upon the glazen shelves kept watch
Matthew and Waldo, guardians of the faith,
The army of unalterable law.

T. S. Eliot

The poems "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," "Preludes," and "Cousin Nancy" are reprinted from *Poems* by T. S. Eliot, by permission of, and by special arrangement with, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., authorized publishers.

Maxwell Bodenheim (1893—)

TWO SONNETS TO MY WIFE

I

Because her voice is Schönberg in a dream
In which his harshness plays with softer keys
This does not mean that it is void of ease
And cannot gather to a strolling gleam.
Her voice is full of manners, and they seem
To place a masquerade on thought and tease
Its strength until it finds that it has knees,
And whimsically leaves its heavy scheme.

Discords can be the search of harmony
For worlds that lie beyond the reach of poise
And must be captured with abandoned hands.
The music of my wife strives to be free
And often takes a light, unbalanced voice
While madly walking over thoughtful lands.

II

My wife relents to life and does not speak
Each moment with a deft and rapid note.
Sometimes a clumsy weirdness finds in her throat
And ushers in a music that is weak
And bargains with the groping of her heart.
But even then she plays with graver tones
That do not sell themselves to laughs and moans
But seek the counsel of a deeper art.

She drapes her loud emotions in a shroud
Of glistening thought that waves above their dance
And sometimes parts to show their startled eyes.
The depths of mind within her have not bowed
To sleek emotion with its amorous glance.
She slaps its face and laughs at its surprise!

Maxwell Bodenheim

From *Introducing Irony*. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Boni & Liveright, New York. Copyright, 1922.

Mark Turbyfill (1896—)

PULSE OF SPRING

The spring has spilt a shining net
Of green-gold buds
Upon the boughs
Of this gray linden-tree.

The hyacinth has lit its torch of amethyst.

A robin sways upon a bow-curved twig,
And sweetly cries.

O spring, forbear!

Mark Turbyfill

CHICAGO

O city of beauty,
They have spoken without understanding;
They have called you evil!

O city of beauty,
Maybe it is only my heart you have shaken
With your sadness of rose evenings,
And the shadows falling
In the misty evening
Under the bridges.

Your avenues are velvet and symmetrical,
As speech slow-moving.

O city of beauty,
I come not with vain enumeration!

For in the untrod night
I have looked upon your rapt
Presence.

There was a whiteness
as of wings stirring.

Mark Turbyfill

From *The Living Frieze.* Collected poems by Mark Turbyfill. Reprinted by permission of the author.

TO THE TALLEST SPRAY

That soft moment
The movement wafted you,
Kindled a wheat-colored dawn,
And I saw you a reaching spray.

Curved wheat-spray,
My thought wafted you:
Tossed up lightly,
I saw your *zephire-step*
Flicker above the dancing wheat.
(Whither do you reach?)

Dim your arabesque of light,
Lean back, mingle with the wheat,
Lest I pluck you from the field.

Mark Turbyfill

From *This Quarter*, Vol. I, No. 1, Spring, 1925. Reprinted by permission of the author

Edward Estlin Cummings (1894—)

Note new [illegible]

CHANSON INNOCENTE I

Ecstasy [illegible]
to [illegible]

in Just-
spring   when the world is mud-
luscious the little
lame balloonman

whistles   far   and wee

and eddieandbill come
running from marbles and
piracies and it's
spring

when the world is puddle-wonderful

the queer
old balloonman whistles
far   and   wee
and bettyandisbel come dancing
from hop-scotch and jump-rope and

it's
spring
and
        the

                goat-footed

balloonMan   whistles
far
and
wee

E. E. Cummings

From *Tulips and Chimneys.* Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher, Thomas Seltzer, Inc.

CHANSON INNOCENTE II

little tree
little silent Christmas tree
you are so little
you are more like a flower

who found you in the green forest
and were you very sorry to come away?
see   i will comfort you
because you smell so sweetly

i will kiss your cool bark
and hug you safe and tight
just as your mother would,
only don't be afraid

look   the spangles
that sleep all the year in a dark box
dreaming of being taken out and allowed to shine,
the balls the chains red and gold the fluffy threads,

put up your little arms
and i'll give them all to you to hold
every finger shall have its ring
and there won't be a single place dark or unhappy

then when you're quite dressed
you'll stand in the window for everyone to see
and how they'll stare!
oh but you'll be very proud

and my little sister and i will take hands
and looking up at our beautiful tree
we'll dance and sing
"Noel Noel"

E. E. Cummings

From *XLI Poems.* Reprinted by permission of the author and The Dial Publishing Company.

ORIENTALE I

i spoke to thee
with a smile and thou didst not
answer
thy mouth is as
a chord of crimson music
Come hither
O thou, is life not a smile?

i spoke to thee with
a song and thou
didst not listen
thine eyes are as a vase
of divine silence
Come hither
O thou, is life not a song?

i spoke
to thee with a soul and
thou didst not wonder
thy face is as a dream locked
in white fragrance
Come hither
O thou, is life not love?

i speak to
thee with a sword
and thou art silent
thy breast is as a tomb
softer than flowers
Come hither
O thou, is love not death?

E. E. Cummings

From *Tulips and Chimneys*. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher, Thomas Seltzer, Inc.

SONG I

the
sky
was
can dy lu
minous
edible
spry
pinks shy
lemons
greens coo l choc
olate
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un der,
a lo
co
mo
tive s pout
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lets

E. E. Cummings

THIS IS THE GARDEN

this is the garden: colors come and go,
frail azures fluttering from night's outer wing
strong silent greens serenely lingering,
absolute lights like baths of golden snow.
This is the garden: pursed lips do blow
upon cool flutes within wide glooms, and sing
(of harps celestial to the quivering string)
invisible faces hauntingly and slow.

This is the garden. Time shall surely reap,
and on Death's blade lie many a flower curled,
in other lands where other songs be sung;
yet stand They here enraptured, as among
the slow deep trees perpetual of sleep
some silver-fingered fountain steals the world.

E. E. Cummings

FROISSART

Thou in whose swordgreat story shine the deeds
of history her heroes, sounds the tread
of those vast armies of the marching dead,
with standards and the neighing of great steeds
moving to war across the smiling meads;
thou by whose page we break the precious bread
of dear communion with the past, and wed
to valor, battle with heroic breeds;

thou, Froissart, for that thou didst love the pen
while others wrote in steel, accept all praise
of after ages, and of hungering days
for whom the old glories move, the old trumpets cry;
who gavest as one of those immortal men
his life that his fair city might not die.

E. E. Cummings

The poems "Song I," "This Is the Garden," and "Froissart" are from *XLI Poems*. Reprinted by permission of the author and The Dial Publishing Company.

OF NICOLETTE

dreaming in marble all the castle lay
like some gigantic ghost-flower born of night
blossoming in white towers to the moon,

soft sighed the passionate darkness to the tune
of tiny troubadours, and (phantom-white)
dumb-blooming boughs let fall their glorious snows,
and the unearthly sweetness of a rose
swam upward from the troubled heart of May;

a Winged Passion woke and one by one
there fell upon the night, like angel's tears,
the syllables of that mysterious prayer,
and as an opening lily drowsy-fair
(when from her couch of poppy petals peers
the sleepy morning) gently draws apart
her curtains, and lays bare her trembling heart,
with beads of dew made jewels by the sun,

so one high shining tower (which as a glass
turned light to flame and blazed with snowy fire)
unfolding, gave the moon a nymphlike face,
a form whose snowy symmetry of grace
haunted the limbs as music haunts the lyre,
a creature of white hands, who letting fall
a thread of lustre from the castle wall
glided, a drop of radiance, to the grass—

shunning the sudden moonbeam's treacherous snare
she sought the harbouring dark, and (catching up
her delicate silk) all white, with shining feet,
went forth into the dew: right wildly beat
her heart at every kiss of daisy-cup,
and from her cheek the beauteous color went
with every bough that-reverently bent
to touch the yellow wonder of her hair.

E. E. Cummings

From *Tulips and Chimneys*. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher, Thomas Seltzer, Inc.

THE NOTES

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE STORIES AND ESSAYS

No effort has been made in the following selections to present in any comprehensive way the vast field of the modern American short story and essay. The limitations of space and the interests of the class of students appealed to in a textbook of this kind make anything like a comprehensive survey of modern prose art both impractical and undesirable. The aim of the editor has been merely to choose a few examples of unimpeachably good literary selections suitable for analytical reading in high-school classes. The editor's chief solicitude, then, has been to find fresh and stimulating stories and essays for young readers, such material as will afford good models in both structure and style and at the same time serve to arouse interest and lead to further reading in contemporary prose of a high literary quality.

Ambrose Bierce, the writer with whom our present selections begin, belongs distinctly to the last quarter of the nineteenth century, but it is only since the publication of his complete works in 1912 and his strange disappearance and mysterious death in 1914 that he has been recognized as a writer of permanent worth. The work of Stephen Crane belongs properly to the period preceding that covered by the bulk of the material in this volume. His place in our literature is now more or less definitely fixed, but like Emily Dickinson he came slowly into his rightful fame. While he belongs chronologically in the last years of the nineteenth century, it was only in the early twentieth century that his significance was clearly discerned. Hamlin Garland won his fame, too, in the eighteen-nineties, but fortunately he has lived on far into the twentieth century and is still producing good work in the field which he opened so auspiciously and made so distinctly his own with *Main-Traveled Roads* in 1890. James Branch Cabell and Joseph Hergesheimer are more distinctly modern, each of them being just now (1926) highly esteemed as a contemporary prose artist. Robert Nathan is a still younger writer, but one who will, we think, eventually achieve a high place among the later American prose stylists.

Among the essayists James Gibbons Huneker has already taken rank as a sort of classic example of the journalistic writer who has developed an individuality of style. William Allen White is another journalist whose significant novels and biographical studies will cause him to be remembered. His "Mary White," a brief obituary of his own seventeen-year-old daughter, has been included here primarily as an example of the artistic character sketch, but partly also, let it be confessed, as an inspiration to high-school students who may see in this brilliant portrait some reflection of themselves. Booth Tarkington is better known as a novelist, short-story writer, and dramatist than as an essayist, but his "Looking Forward to the Great Adventure," a vigorous narrative treatment of the problem of immortality, seemed so appropriate for young readers in this particular period of our intellectual development that it was chosen in preference to a selection from Tarkington's other works. Finally, since literary criticism of contemporary writers is of great importance to those who would know the tendencies of the time, it has been thought wise to include at least one sample of the great mass of writing of this kind now pouring from our presses, and we have chosen Conrad Aiken's "Poetic Realism," an essay dealing with two of the most significant of our contemporary poets, to illustrate the trend of present-day literary criticism.

A Horseman of the Sky (Bierce, p. 643)

INTRODUCTORY:

Ambrose Bierce (1842–1914?) was a strange and erratic but a fascinating and brilliant man. He was born in Meigs County, Ohio, and grew up on a farm in a family composed of his parents and several children. At nineteen he ran away from home to join the Union army and was taken in as a drummer-boy. He was later promoted to a lieutenancy and saw a considerable amount of active fighting, being twice wounded, and was finally brevetted as a major for gallantry in action. After the war (1866) he went to California and engaged in journalistic work. In 1872 he went to England and became associated with the poet Thomas Hood as assistant editor of a periodical called *Fun*. He later returned to California and became the editor of the *Argonaut* and the *Wasp* and contributor to the *Overland Monthly*. He also conducted a weekly column in the *San Francisco Examiner* under the title of "Prattle." Later he went East and became a contributing editor to the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, living quietly at Washington, D. C. He wrote many stories in the melodramatic vein of Edgar Allan Poe, several volumes of poetry, and much sharp satire. His first volume of stories was whimsically called *Cobwebs from an Empty Skull* (1874). His best volume of short stories was first called *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians*, (1891), but was later issued under the title of *In the Midst of Life* (1894). Another volume of short stories dealing with strange and supernatural adventures and events was called *Can Such Things Be?* (1898). In 1914 he went on a mysterious journey into Mexico, some say to join the rebel forces of Pancho Villa, and he died naturally or was killed there in some unknown way. No dependable account of his death has as yet been recorded. In 1912, about a year before he went West for the last time, his complete works were collected in twelve handsome volumes, and since that time Bierce's fame has been steadily rising. "A Horseman of the Sky," the initial story in the volume called *In the Midst of Life* (Vol. II of Complete Works), is an excellent example of Bierce's marvelous technical skill in the construction of a striking climactic plot in the very brief type of short story later made popular by the brilliant work of O. Henry. There is a certain touch of elevated formality of style in Bierce's work, but his creative imagination and his gift of constructing plots with powerful climaxes mark him as a writer of genius. He has little of the effect of actuality and little sympathy for the commonplace incidents of everyday life. To him a good story always meant some high moment of strange exaltation, supernatural power, or romantic action. That he succeeded in writing this kind of story better than any other American since Poe, few will deny.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the situation as presented in the first section of the story? (2) Why is the setting so carefully described? (3) The second section opens with an earlier incident (a device which is called "reverting narrative"); what is the purpose of this incident? (4) What dramatic situation is developed as the young soldier wakes from his perilous nap? (5) Why are the father's earlier words of advice repeated at the end of section two? (6) Why is the officer introduced in section three? What is the connection of the scene painted here with the title of the story? (7) What startling revelation is made in the short fourth section or climax of the story? (8) If you had been Carter Druse would you have shot the man, or the horse, or neither? (9) Do you think the father was killed by the terrific plunge? Would the story have been weakened by a happy ending?

A Young Soldier's First Battle (Crane, p. 651)

INTRODUCTORY:

The fame of Stephen Crane (1870–1900), the first notable realist among our modern novelists, is steadily increasing. His sketches, his short stories, his novels, his poems, and even his war correspondence as a newspaper reporter are being read and studied more and more every year by the real lovers of our literature. *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), his greatest work, portrays in remarkably vivid language the experiences and emotions of a youthful Union soldier in the battle of Chancellorsville. The book is at once a study of the psychology of an army and an analysis of one individual soldier's experiences in this psychological mass. It is really almost unbelievable that a young man — Crane was only twenty-five when he wrote the book — who had never been in a battle, had never even seen an army in action, could conjure up such realistic battle pictures and reproduce such lively and realistic emotions as are presented in this story. We reprint here a short segment made up of Chapter V and a small part of Chapter VI, which section sets forth the experiences of Henry Fleming in the first part of his first battle. The climax of this section is the youth's flight from the battle-field, where our selection naturally ends. In his first battle Henry is in a frenzy of fear, and before he knows what he is doing he finds himself fleeing aimlessly from the front lines. Later on in his flight he passes through a marvelous series of emotions and vividly realistic experiences. At last he finds himself in a long line of the retreating wounded soldiers, and then he begins to regret his cowardice, fervently wishing that he could himself display, like his comrades, some bloody wound, "a red badge of courage." But this is not the whole story. Henry eventually regains control of his faculties, renews his courage, re-enters the fighting lines and bears himself like a seasoned soldier, winning for himself great praise for nerve and daring, and finally forgetting the ignominy of his first cowardly flight. (For a biographical sketch of Stephen Crane, see any recent history of American literature.)

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Imagine yourself a young soldier in your first battle: how would you feel? As you read, notice how the whole picture is given

from a single point of view, that of the young boy soldier. (2) What is the picture that flashes before Henry Fleming's mind as his regiment waited for the attack of the enemy? (3) How is the excitement of the colonel of the regiment shown? (4) Point out evidences of Henry Fleming's state of mind as the battle begins, such for example as the perspiration streaming down his face. Try to realize just how the youth felt. (5) Describe the actions of the men and officers near the boy. (6) What pictures of fear and death are presented on pp. 655-6? What was the result of the first charge of the enemy? How did the men feel after this charge? (7) Describe the artillery duel which followed. (8) How did the boy feel when he realized his first baptism of fire had been successfully passed? (9) What was the effect of the sudden renewal of the attack? Describe in particular how Henry felt as the battle began anew. (10) What was the final outcome of the boy's fit of fear? (11) When you have finished reading the selection, go back over it and study the style. Note the suggestions which bring out the state of mind of the whole body of soldiers and of the particular individual in the midst of this collective mass. Make a list of half a dozen vivid figures of speech or descriptive phrases, such as "They (the flags) were like beautiful birds strangely undaunted in a storm."

The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky (Crane, p. 660)

INTRODUCTORY:

This story appeared in *McClure's Magazine* for February, 1898, and later in the volume called *The Open Boat* (1898), a collection of eight short-stories. Irving Bacheller, himself a novelist and short-story writer, had organized a syndicate for publishing articles and short-stories in various periodicals and newspapers over the country, and in 1894 he successfully syndicated Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* in serial form. Then he agreed to finance Crane on a trip through the West, Southwest, and Mexico in order that the brilliant young writer might gather fresh material for a series of short-stories to be similarly syndicated. Crane visited ranches and saw cowboys at work, he studied the Mississippi River country, he tried to prevent a fight between two rowdies in a saloon, he visited Lincoln, Little Rock, New Orleans, San Antonio, and other cities, and finally made his way to Mexico City in search of color and adventure. He fell in love with Texas, particularly with picturesque San Antonio, the City of the Alamo. "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," probably written in San Antonio, is one of his several stories dealing with Texas life and character. It is a charming example of this writer's vivid and picturesque style and keen insight into the psychology of the simple, unsophisticated types of western character.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Make a good heading for each of the four divisions and thus produce a simple outline of the story. (The four questions which follow will help you to make these headings.) (2) Describe the actions and feelings of Jack Potter and his bride on the Pullman. (3) What was the situation at the Weary Gentleman Saloon as the train pulled up at Yellow Sky? (4) Draw a portrait of Scratchy Wilson on a rampage in his town. (5) How did Scratchy and Jack meet, and what was the outcome of their encounter? (6) Now state the theme of the

story. (Study the conclusion and the title closely before deciding on the theme.) (7) Point out realistic touches in the story. Does the author succeed in making you "hear, feel, and above all *see*" the actuality of the life and characters presented? (8) Does the sudden turn at the end of this story suggest the method of O. Henry in his stories? Compare Crane's story with one of O. Henry's stories. (9) Compare the style of this story with the style of the preceding selection from *The Red Badge of Courage.*

The Leaser (Garland, p. 674)

INTRODUCTORY:

Hamlin Garland is a true son of the West. He was born (1860) in West Salem (near La Crosse), Wisconsin, of pioneer parents who came from New England. He has great sympathy for the working classes, particularly for the farmers, miners, Indians, and ranchmen of the West. He belongs to the modern realists who paint life just as it is with all its harshness and drabness, but it can be said to his credit that he is never vulgar or coarse and never revels in the sordid sex problems that obsess so many modern novelists. He writes only of what he knows from first-hand experience, and hence there is a convincing quality in all his work. His first book of short stories, *Main-Traveled Roads* (1890), treats of the hard, toilsome, dreary life of the western farmers. This book gradually won its way into public favor, and since its appearance practically everything that Garland has written has found a ready acceptance and a hearty welcome. He has written many long stories and several volumes of short stories, poems, biography, and personal reminiscences. His life story is contained in two remarkable volumes, *A Son of the Middle Border* (1917) and *A Daughter of the Middle Border* (1921). If you read nothing else of his, try to get these two volumes and learn something of the simple but beautiful story of the struggles of a pioneer family in the Middle Border and of the steady rise of a country boy from obscurity to fame. The first volume treats of his life up to the age of about thirty-three. The second volume, which is dedicated to his wife, Zulime Taft, continues the story down to the period following the World War. A third volume in this series, *Trail Makers of the Middle Border* (1926), reverts to the pioneer life of Richard Garland, his father, and treats in a somewhat romantic or fictional form the story of the pioneers in their settlement of the Middle West.

Our selection is a simple narrative taken from the volume of short stories called *They of the High Trails* (1916). It has the invigorating flavor of the open-air western life and is an admirable example of character study.

EXPLANATORY:

677 : 135. *cached my valise.* To cache means to store food, ammunition, supplies in a hole under ground. Note how the western miner uses his own local word for checking his valise at the station.

678 : 153. *brougham.* A closed carriage. Pronounced brū′am.

678 : 173. *faze.* Disturb, worry; a local form of *feeze*, the provincial English word meaning to vex.

680 : 228. *Nitsky.* Slang for not at all.

684 : 359. *locoed.* Poisoned, crazed; used in the West to describe cattle poisoned by the loco weed.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Tell how the author made the acquaintance of the leaser. (2) How much of the story is told in conversation? (3) How are we informed of the leaser's present condition and of his past experiences? (4) Relate the story of how the leaser left his boyhood home in Michigan. (5) Tell how he returned to his old home. (6) How is the love motive introduced into the story? (7) Why did the hero take his mother into his confidence? (8) What scene is re-enacted exactly as it first occurred eleven years before? Why does the author repeat this scene? (9) How did the hero's visit to his old home turn out? (10) Just how did the old man finally surrender? (11) How does the story end? (12) Do you get a clear conception of the characters in the story?

Porcelain Cups (Cabell, p. 687)

INTRODUCTORY:

Who is the greatest living writer in America? Many believe that James Branch Cabell (1879—) is the greatest all-round writer, the greatest prose master at any rate, and one of the very greatest artists America has ever produced. He was born in Richmond, Virginia, graduated (1898) from William and Mary College, where he taught French and Greek for a time. He then worked on the Richmond *Times* and the New York *Herald* for three or four years, and about 1902 began contributing stories and poems to the magazines. He went abroad to satisfy his longing to see the romantic places of the old world and to make original investigations in the early romantic literature of England, Ireland, and France. About 1902 he began publishing the long list of romances which are now accredited to him, but his work made little or no impression on the general public. This did not deter him from continuing in the course he had laid out for himself, namely, to escape from the drabness of the real world by delving into the beauties and mysteries of old romance and long-forgotten stories of love and heroism. His motto as set down rather early in his career was "to write perfectly about beautiful happenings." He steeped himself in old romances and beautiful idealistic literature from all ages and almost all nations. He studied old family genealogies and, in fact, became himself for a time a sort of professional genealogist. He realized that he would probably never get a hearing from the modern practical world around him, but that seemed not to bother him so much, for he felt that if he did worthy work the world would some day discover it. Then suddenly in 1919 he acquired an undesirable, but somehow we now think fortunate, notoriety by having his beautiful dream story *Jurgen* condemned and suppressed. From that time on he was both a made and a condemned man. The courts failed to sustain the charges of indecency and vulgarity brought against the book, and it was released for free public circulation. Naturally everybody wanted to read not only the book that caused such a stir but all the other works of the author who was the center of attack by the Comstockerists and the purists. His books are not simple or elementary, and hence they are rather difficult reading for young readers. But their subtlety, their irony, their insight, and above all their consummate style make them a delight to the cultured and widely read person. Cabell writes for the mature and the learned rather than for the democratic masses. He is himself distinctly a romantic rather than a realistic fictionist, and yet he highly esteems the work of some of the modern realists. He has created a whole romantic world which he calls Poictesme, and he has peopled this idealized dream country with charming romantic characters drawn from the various rich sources of old world romance in English, Irish, French, German, Italian, and Spanish literature. If he cannot find a real source for his imaginative purposes, he will create an old poet and make up a name for him and pretend that he is drawing material from this pseudo-medieval writer who is none other than the creature of Cabell's own brain. *The Line of Love* (1905) was one of his first books. In its earlier form it contained seven love stories. In 1921 in the second edition Cabell added two more love stories, one at the beginning and one at the end, and cemented the whole series by comments scattered along between the stories, thus connecting them as if they were the love adventures in a single family covering many generations. "Porcelain Cups" was placed as the last story in the book. In the Envoi or Epilog to the volume Cabell explains that Edward and Cynthia Musgrave emigrated to America and settled in Virginia. Thus the famous Musgrave family in America is connected in direct line with the heroes and heroines of the love stories reaching far back into medieval times. This is, of course, playfully ironic, but at any rate it brings the stories home to us by showing that we in America have inherited the romantic ideals of the great souls of medieval Europe.

EXPLANATORY:

687 : 5. *Lord Pevensey.* George Bulmar, Lord Pevensey, a character invented or revived by Mr. Cabell for this story. There is at Pevensey in Essex a famous old Norman building called Pevensey Castle.

687 : 6. *Robert Cecil.* A statesman of Queen Elizabeth's time; died 1612.

687 : 9. *Cataia.* A poetic name for Cathay or China, where the finest porcelain was made.

687 : 12. *céladon.* A kind of rare pale-green porcelain.

687 : 22. *Plague.* There were several outbreaks of the terrible plague known as the black death in this period of English history.

688 : 32. *King Henri.* Henry IV of Navarre, founder of the Bourbon dynasty in France; died 1610.

688 : 38. *Elizabeth Tudor.* Queen Elizabeth (1533–1603). The Tudor royal family begins with Henry VII.

688 : 62. *Windsor—or Holyrood or the Louvre.* Windsor Castle in Berkshire is the residence of the English sovereigns; Holyrood is a palace in Edinburgh, formerly the residence of the Scottish kings; the Louvre is an ancient palace in Paris, the former residence of the French kings. The Louvre is now primarily a museum of art, the finest collection of paintings in the world being housed in it.

689 : 68. *baggage.* An old word formerly playfully applied to a pert or flirting type of woman.

689 : 78. *Gloriana.* The queen of fairyland in Spenser's *Faerie Queen,* representing Queen Elizabeth.

689 : 87. *compounds.* Makes peace, agrees.

689 : 95. *Béarnais.* A surname given to Henry IV of France because he was born in Béarn, an ancient province in Southern France.

689 : 97. *Barrière.* Probably a coined name for the supposed assassin.

692 : 181–182. *Tamburlaine, with Techelles and Usumcasane and Theridamas.* Characters in Marlowe's play *Tamburlaine the Great.*

692 : 186. *ephemera.* An insect of short life; hence anything of short life.

692 : 191. *Kit Marlowe.* Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593), the famous English dramatist. The story of his death as related here has been many times repeated, but only recently, in 1925, was the true account of his death revealed by the research of John Leslie Hotson. In his book on the subject Hotson shows that the quarrel arose over the settlement of the drinking score and not over a woman. An interesting article on how the facts of Marlowe's death were discovered may be found in the *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1925, under the title "Tracking Down a Murderer." Hotson has also issued a book showing all the documents.

692 : 199. *oafs.* Coarse fellows, fools.

693 : 213. *bluebottle.* A fly of a dark blue color.

693 : 220. *Euripides.* A great Greek tragic poet; died 406 B. C.

694 : 257. *Cynthia.* A name of the moon goddess, mentioned because the heroine is named Cynthia.

695 : 282. "*Come live with me.*" Stanzas from Marlowe's famous song, "The Passionate Shepherd."

695 : 299. *Sestos.* An ancient city on the Hellespont, the home of Hero. See Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*.

695 : 305. "*Hero and Leander.*" A long poem by Marlowe, but left without the concluding section.

695 : 310. *wench.* Girl; a term of endearment in Marlowe's time.

695 : 312. *that heavenly Helen of whom I wrote.* Marlowe's best known passage on Helen is found near the end of *Doctor Faustus.* It begins,

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?

700 : Title. *Egeria.* One of the Camenae or fountain nymphs; used here ironically for Cynthia.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) The author has very conveniently made an outline of the story in four sub-headings. Explain what is treated under each of these four headings. (2) Who is the central character in the story? Do you admire this character? (3) Holding this central character in mind, state the theme of the story. (4) Do you think the satire on woman is quite fair and just? Are there many women like Cynthia Allonby? (5) Draw a contrast between the two lovers as presented in sections one and two. Do you get a clear picture of each of them? Which of these two lovers do you most admire? (6) Do you think the harsh words uttered by Marlowe upon learning that his poem had been burned were justifiable? (7) What is the chief value of the third section of the story? Do you get a clearer notion of the principal character from this section? How? (8) Why does the author take so much pains to tell us exactly where Cynthia placed the hand-mirror

when she had finished her primping? (9) What type of character is introduced in the fourth section? How does he help to bring the story to a striking dénouement? How does he differ from the other two lovers? (10) What does he have to say about poetry and delicate china cups? (11) What can you say about the style in which this story is written? (12) Report on Marlowe's life; read the article by John Leslie Hotson in the *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1925, or his book *The Death of Marlowe* (1925), and tell the true story of Marlowe's death.

The Tailor (Hergesheimer, p. 706)

INTRODUCTORY:

Joseph Hergesheimer (1880 —) is one of the most gifted of America's present-day novelists. He was born in Philadelphia and brought up in a "rigorously Presbyterian" family (see Mr. Hergesheimer's autobiographical sketch "A Presbyterian Child"). He had several spells of illness which prevented him from going to school in his youth. In fact, he attended a Quaker school in Philadelphia for only a few terms, and later studied intermittently for a few days in each month at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, so that we can hardly say that he had any formal education worth mentioning. He read many popular novels and romances, such as those by the Duchess (Margaret Hungerford, an Irish novelist) and James Fenimore Cooper, and thus educated himself largely by private reading. All the members of his family died, and he was left, with a small patrimony, to do as he pleased. He knocked around the country in various sorts of company and was apparently spending his life with no purpose or definite ambition. He tells how at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, he read the proof of a very poor novel, and believing that he could write a better story, he secured a second-hand typewriter and began to learn the business of creative writing. He admits that his ignorance at this time was appalling, but he had faith in his own abilities, and he kept doggedly at his task of learning to write fiction. He wrote his first stories over many times before sending them out, and when he sent them to the magazines they were promptly returned. It took him fourteen years of hard practice to be able to write a story that would sell. When he finally got before the public, his rise to popularity was rapid. His best novels are *The Three Black Pennys* (1917), *Java Head* (1919), *Linda Condon* (1919), *Cytherea* (1921), *The Bright Shawl* (1922), *Balisand* (1924), and *Tampico* (1926). James Branch Cabell praises Hergesheimer highly, and Carl Van Doren pronounces *Linda Condon* almost the finest novel written in America since Hawthorne. Hergesheimer has written two volumes of short stories, but his forte is in the longer novel rather than in the more restricted form of the short story. He is a careful workman, using an elaborate decorative style almost exclusively, but always arousing intense interest in his characters and in their story. The short ironical character sketch here given under the title of "The Tailor" appeared in *The Reviewer* (Richmond) July, 1924. The selection illustrates Hergesheimer's acrid irony and restrained but highly decorative style; it is not, however, a fair sample of this writer's entrancing power as a storyteller. One can only get the full force of his narrative power by reading his longer novels.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What type of character is presented in Harvey Ellis? (2) At what season does the episode open? Where do you suppose the scene to be laid? (3) Describe Ellis as he entered the tailor's shop. (4) How is the author's tendency toward the richly decorated style indicated in the descriptions of the shop, the characters, etc.? (5) What is the attitude of the tradesmen toward Ellis? (6) How does Mr. Dawson, the clerk, feel in the presence of so rich a man? What does he think of the extravagant waste of money? (7) What bad break does the clerk finally make? (8) How does the incident end? Of what poem by E. A. Robinson does the conclusion remind you? (9) Does Hergesheimer point any moral at the conclusion of the incident?

School Lets Out (Nathan, p. 712)

INTRODUCTORY:

Robert Nathan (see the biographical note on p. 968) is one of the younger writers who has not been swept away by the desire for originality and the lure of novelty. He writes in a style of pure, simple, beautiful English. His words seem to flow along as sweetly and as naturally as the clear waters of a meadow stream. There is no evidence of effort, no pretense of fine writing, no suggestion of strained subtlety or ultra-modern irony. His characters stand out in strong relief and natural poses. He has written only a few short prose books, but every one of them is a work of art—*Peter Kindred* (1919), *Autumn* (1921), *The Puppet Master* (1923), and *Jonah* (1924). Mr. Nathan is a good musician and an excellent poet as well as a charming prose writer. Examples of his simple lyric verse are given elsewhere in this book (see p. 857). The selection in our text is taken from *Autumn*. We have added to Chapter II, called "School Lets Out," a brief passage from a later chapter by way of conclusion to show that the old teacher lost his school before another session opened. *Autumn* is a pathetic study of old age. Mr. Jeminy, the rapidly aging teacher, is one of the old-fashioned idealists who find themselves out-moded in these hustling, practical, utilitarian modern times. The people want a younger teacher, and so they turn the old man off. He wanders away and becomes a helper on a farm, but eventually he returns to his old home to be happily married to one of his friends of the earlier years. Study the selection for its vivid characterization, its profound pathos, its penetrating insight into the better things of life, and above all for its simple, chaste, charming style.

EXPLANATORY:

712 : 24. *Stoics, Gnostics, and Fathers of the Church.* The Stoics were a group of Greek philosophers who flourished about two and a half centuries B. C. The Gnostics were an early Christian group of philosophers who flourished in the first and second centuries A. D. The Fathers of the Church were the early teachers and defenders of Christianity.

714 : 87. *Ceres.* The Roman goddess of grain and harvests.

715 : 108. *Saint Francis.* Saint Francis of Assisi was an Italian monk who founded the order of Franciscans in the thirteenth century.

He espoused the vows of poverty and became famous for his kindness and tenderness, particularly to birds and dumb animals. He was canonized as an ideal Christian saint.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why is old Mr. Jeminy so happy in cleaning up the school house for the final examinations? (2) What kind of teacher was he? (3) What is the advantage of having his landlady, Mrs. Grumble, present at the house-cleaning? (4) What further facts do you learn about Mr. Jeminy and Mrs. Grumble in the gardening episode? (5) Why is the incident of Saint Francis of Assisi introduced? (6) What is the nature of the final examination which Mr. Jeminy gave the children? (7) Which is more important, the examinations or the last words of the old teacher? (8) Do you think it was right to dismiss the old teacher? What feeling is aroused by the concluding paragraphs?

Poe and His Polish Contemporary (Huneker, p. 718)

INTRODUCTORY:

James Gibbons Huneker (1860–1921)—a descendant of a line of artists, his grandfather being a noted Irish poet and his father a distinguished musician—was born in Philadelphia in 1860. Young Huneker attended a military school and afterwards studied law. He had developed his gift for music during his youth, however, and the call of the art was too strong to allow him to follow a legal career. During his young manhood he became a teacher of the organ and the piano and followed this occupation for about ten years. He had traveled quite extensively over Europe and had met many musicians, painters, poets, and artists of all kinds. He was a good conversationalist and he soon began to turn his talk into articles for different journals and art publications. His range of interests was so wide and his information so full that he could write almost equally well on any of, what he called, "the seven arts." When he began to collect and publish his essays in a series of volumes, he was soon recognized as the dean of American art critics. His wide acquaintance with artists, his almost omnivorous reading, his knowledge of the technique of the several arts, all added to his ability to make art criticism interesting. Musical, literary, scientific, and general art references are scattered thickly on his pages. The range of his allusions may be readily seen from the characteristic essay on Poe and Chopin given in the text. This essay, written late in his career, illustrates how Huneker used one type of art to elucidate and enhance another. We see here literary and musical criticism combined in such a way as to throw much light on two notable geniuses of the nineteenth century, Poe the American poet and Chopin the Polish musician.

EXPLANATORY:

718 : 18. *Flaubert.* Gustave Flaubert (1821–1880), celebrated French novelist, author of *Madame Bovary.*

718 : 19. *Jan Vermeer.* Jan van der Meer (1632–1675) was a famous Dutch painter, usually called Vermeer of Delft. The Pole and Frenchman referred to in this sentence are Chopin and Flaubert.

718 : 23. *Paderewski.* The noted Polish pianist, who after the European war became premier of Poland.

718 : 27. *Solange Sand.* The daughter of George Sand. See the note on George Sand below.

718-719 : 32-37. *Billy Burton . . . . John Sartain . . . . Judge Conrad . . . . the elder Booth . . . . Graham.* Names familiar in Philadelphia a hundred years ago. William Evans Burton was an English actor and author who came to America and founded *The Gentleman's Magazine*, of which Poe was at one time editor. John Sartain was born in London but made his fame as a painter and engraver in America. Judge Robert Taylor Conrad was a dramatist as well as a judge, and for a time he edited *Graham's Magazine.* Junius Brutus Booth was an English actor who came to America and won great fame in Shakespearean tragic characters. George Rex Graham was the publisher of *Graham's Magazine* and other periodicals. Poe was once editor of this magazine.

719 : 40. *Fairmount Park.* A large park on the outskirts of Philadelphia.

719 : 64. *Christopher Morley.* See the note on page 969. Christopher Marlowe (see the note on page 900) was sometimes called Kit Morley or Marler.

720 : 76. *Fordham.* The cottage near (now in) New York City where Poe lived at one time.

720 : 91. *Glanvill.* In the story "Ligeia" Poe quotes from Joseph Glanvill, a noted English clergyman and philosopher; died 1680.

720 : 92. "*Helen, thy beauty.*" See the poem on page 403 of the editor's *Selections from American Literature* and the notes thereon, page 594. See also "Ulalume" on page 406 and the notes on page 596 of the same volume.

720 : 96. *Mozart's "La ci darem la mano."* An aria from the opera "Don Giovanni." It means "We shall give each other the hand."

721 : 121. *Baudelaire.* Charles Pierre Baudelaire (1821–1867) was a noted French poet, author of *Fleurs du Mal* ("Flowers of Evil") and translator of Poe's stories into French.

721 : 122. *E. T. W. Hoffmann.* A German musician and romance writer, 1776–1822, who influenced Poe profoundly.

721 : 123. *James Clarence Mangan and Monticelli.* Mangan (1803–1849) was an Irish poet addicted to the use of opium; Monticelli (1670–1748) was an Italian painter.

721 : 129. *Walter Pater.* An English critic and writer of exquisite prose, 1839–1894. The quotation which follows is from the Conclusion to his book of essays, *The Renaissance.*

722 : 142. *George Sand.* The pen-name of Lucile Dupin-Dudevant (1804–1876), a celebrated French woman novelist.

722 : 149–150. *dipsomaniacs . . . . psychiatrists.* A dipsomaniac is a drunkard; a psychiatrist is a medical expert on mental diseases.

722 : 157. *Rabelaisian language.* Rabelais (d. 1553) was a French satirist who at times used very coarse, even vulgar, language.

722 : 169–173. *Stendhal . . . . Chateaubriand . . . . Talleyrand.* Stendhal (d. 1842) was the pen-name of a French romantic writer whose real name was Marie Henri Beyle. He is referred to later in the essay as Henry Beyle-Stendhal. Chateaubriand (d. 1848) was a French writer who visited America about 1790 and wrote a book about this country. Talleyrand (d. 1838) was a French diplomat who visited America about 1795.

723 : 177. *conversazione.* A meeting for talk on art subjects.

723 : 197. *hasheesh.* An intoxicating drink or smoke made from Indian hemp.

723 : 209. *planturous.* An anglicized form of the French *plantureux,* meaning abundant.

723 : 210. *Heine.* Heinrich Heine was a German poet and prose writer; died 1856.

724 : 216. *Matthew Arnold.* English critic and poet of the nineteenth century; familiarly referred to just below in the text as "Mat."

724 : 234. *Mallarmé.* A French poet (1842–1898) who translated Poe's poems into French.

725 : 252. *Mickiewicz.* The greatest of the Polish poets, but not widely known outside of his native land (1798–1855).

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What striking chronological parallels are developed in the first paragraph? (2) Give the topics of the second and third paragraphs. Why was it natural for the boy Huneker to become interested in both Chopin and Poe? What different kinds of artists are mentioned in these two paragraphs? (3) What local interests are told of in the fourth paragraph? (4) In the fifth paragraph the instinctive desire of the two artists for musical forms of expression is emphasized. Mention some of Poe's musical poems and some of Chopin's compositions referred to in this paragraph. (5) What reasons are given as to why the two artists should have died young? (6) Chopin once planned to come to America; if he had come, he might have met Poe. What fanciful ideas does Huneker develop on this supposition? (7) What general comparison is instituted in the paragraph on page 720? (8) In what type of art do we find the two men at their best? (9) How are the two finally classified? In what one respect does Huneker think Chopin had the advantage over Poe? (10) If possible, arrange a Poe-Chopin program consisting of selections from Poe's poetry and Chopin's music. You might make use of phonograph records if you cannot secure satisfactory musicians to assist you.

Mary White (White, p. 726)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable obituaries on record. On the day after Mary White's funeral, her father, William Allen White (1868—), the editor of the *Gazette,* a daily paper of Emporia, Kansas, wrote the obituary notice of his own seventeen-year-old daughter and published it in his paper as a part of his day's work. Whether he realized that he was writing a masterpiece or not we do not know, but surely here is a character sketch that the world will long cherish. The portrait of a promising and vivacious high-school girl is so accurate and life-like that everyone who reads it at once feels on intimate terms with the lovely, generous-hearted being. There is no maudlin sentimentality, no mourning and weeping, nothing of the heart-broken, chief-mourner attitude; but in every sentence there is a sane balance, a sober presentation of facts both favorable and unfavorable, and a piercing pathos blended with an enviable restraint and artistic repose — qualities rarely found even in great literature, and certainly not often found in personal obituaries. White is one of the most distinguished editors in the country. He has written a number of excellent books, among them *The Court of Boyville* (1899), *A Certain Rich Man* (1909), and *In the Heart of a Fool* (1918). He has also recently published searching biographical studies of Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Calvin Coolidge. Young readers should by all means become acquainted with the delightful stories of elementary-school life in *The Court of Boyville.*

EXPLANATORY:

729 : 126. *The poor she had always with her*, etc. Do you recognize the source of these phrases?

730 : 145. *Peter Pan.* See Sir James M. Barrie's delightful fairy play of this title.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why did White wish first to correct the mistaken impression made by the Associated Press dispatch? (This opening leads naturally to an accurate account of the accident.) (2) What three characteristics of the girl are emphasized in the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs? (3) How does the girl's use of her car indicate her character? (4) To what are the last four paragraphs devoted? Are they well written? What is the value of the short paragraph consisting of only three words? (5) As a fitting tribute to the memory of Mary White, read in your best style the paragraph beginning "For she used the car," page 728.

Looking Forward to the Great Adventure (Tarkington, p. 731)

INTRODUCTORY:

(Newton) Booth Tarkington is well known as "The Gentleman from Indiana." He was born at Indianapolis in 1869, and after gaining an elementary education there he was sent to Phillips Exeter Academy, and then to Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, and finally to Princeton University. Though by no means a brilliant student, he managed to graduate from Princeton with the bachelor's degree in 1893, and in 1899 and 1918 respectively he was given the honorary degrees of M. A. and Litt. D. by his *alma mater*. He was noted at Princeton for his indifferent singing of "Danny Deever" and other ballads, and he also took an interest in the student publications. He tried first to make an illustrator of himself, but he soon found that his talents did not lie in that direction. He then decided to make a writer of himself, and for seven years after graduation he worked hard and sent out many stories, but he was unable to sell a single one. Finally he succeeded in getting a publisher for his first novel, *The Gentleman from Indiana* (1899), and it won immediate favor with the public. This first book was soon followed by a thrilling romance called *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1900), and since the appearance of these two books Tarkington has been rated as one of those fortunate writers of fiction who have both a high literary value and a strong popular appeal. In 1918 he won the Pulitzer prize for the best novel of the year with his *The Magnificent Ambersons*, and this honor was again conferred on him in 1922 for his *Alice Adams*. His books are too numerous to be catalogued here, but no excuse could be offered for omitting to mention *The Turmoil* (1915), which many have adjudged to be Tarkington's best book and one of the strongest of recent American novels. Tarkington has also written some wonderful stories of youth, mainly for mature or adult readers and hence not universally liked by younger persons — *Penrod* (1914), the story of an eleven-year-old boy, and *Seventeen* (1916), the story of William Sylvester Baxter, "Silly Bill" at the interesting calf-love age of seventeen, being the most notable of his books about young people. According to Professor William Lyon Phelps, Tarkington writes with "humor, charm, lightness of touch, a certain winsomeness of style as persuasive as sunshine." He makes his characters very real, but his endings are not always convincing. He has a tendency to bring even a tragic situation to a happy outcome. But this is doubtless only a reflection of his own natural temperament, for he looks on the bright side of life and hence almost always instinctively gives his characters a chance for happiness in the end. Besides his novels, he has written numerous plays, short stories, novelettes, and essays. Since his stories are almost all too long to include in a textbook, we have chosen to illustrate this writer's excellent style by one of his essays. A subject like the immortality of the soul is usually discussed in a dry, serious, philosophic manner; but here we have this subject presented almost in the form of a story, with plenty of conversation and character portrayal and numerous incidents or narrative illustrations to enforce his points, all done in the light, breezy, attractive style for which Tarkington is noted.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What situation and subject of discussion is used to lead up to the main question of the essay? What proverbs are introduced in this introductory passage? Is this an interesting way to open the discussion of a serious problem? (2) What incident is used by the Doctor to prove that man in his primitive state does not believe but *knows* there is a future life? (3) How is Plato and his opinion introduced? Who was Plato? (4) What theories against the traditional belief in the immortality of the soul are presented? (5) What does the Doctor think about the existence of spirits and the possibility of communication with the dead? (6) In reasoning about the continuance of the existing soul, what analogy does the Doctor draw? (7) Could a mere brain without a personality behind it produce a great building like the Taj Mahal or a great poem like Gray's "Elegy"? (8) How is the famous Italian violinist Paganini introduced? Repeat in substance the Doctor's argument about Paganini's musical talent and heredity. (9) What did the ancients believe to be the seat of the mind? What do modern thinkers accept as the seat of the mind? (10) What illustration does the Doctor use to show that injuring the brain or mind does not destroy the personality or soul of an individual? (11) How does man grow in knowledge? What illustration is used to show that man refuses to believe a thing can be done until it is actually accomplished? (12) What other examples about the form of the earth and the worship of the sun are used in this section of the article? (13) How does the Doctor apply all the past mistakes of man's progress in knowledge to the question at issue (p. 745)? (14) Into what three groups does he place all philosophers or thinking persons—in other words, who are those who say "No," "I Don't know," and "Yes"? (15) Which of these three do you think most logical, most nearly right,

and why? (16) In the last section of the essay how does the author bring his readers back to the starting point? Had you forgotten all about the modern society lady and the worldly motto of the introduction? (17) After the Doctor departed, what effect of the discussion was left on the mind of the young inquirer? Explain the humorous effect of the paradox in the final sentence.

Poetic Realism: Masters and Sandburg (Aiken, p. 749)

INTRODUCTORY:

Conrad (Potter) Aiken (1889—) is both a poet and a critic of poetry. (See the note on him, p. 968.) His *Scepticisms* (1819) is a collection of critical essays dealing with modern English and American poetry. While the book pretends to be nothing more than a series of detached notes on contemporary poetry, it contains many good ideas on how to judge poetry and literature in general and is a valuable contribution to the criticism of contemporary poetry. The passage selected here is made up of parts of two widely separated chapters, but the underlying idea of the magic of poetic realism makes it possible to read the two sections as a single essay.

EXPLANATORY:

750 : 37. *Mr. Masefield....Mr. Gibson.* John Masefield (1878—) and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson (1878—) two present-day English poets.

751 : 83. *Becquer or Shelley.* Gustave Becquer (1836–1870) was a Spanish poet who wrote a weird, elfin-like kind of poetry all his own; Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) was the tensely lyrical and vividly imaginative English poet, author of "Ode to the Skylark," "The Cloud," "Ode to the West Wind," etc.

751 : 100. *Pavlov's law.* Ivan Petrovich Pavlov (1849—), a Russian physiologist, author, and professor. His work on the digestive glands has been translated into English.

752 : 111. *Freudians.* Followers of Sigmund Freud (1856—), an Austrian medical scientist who wrote much on nervous diseases and developed the theory that all or most forms of mental experience like dreams and writing poetry are the result of suppressing certain natural desires and appetites, particularly the appetite of sex. He proposed psycho-analysis as a method of treating various nervous diseases.

753 : 142. *ictus.* Stress, accent; literally a stroke or beat, as of the heart.

753 : 156. *Hogarth.* William Hogarth (1697–1764) was an English painter who produced several powerful but coarse and realistic pictures in a series of related scenes.

753 : 165. *sadistic.* Cruel. This is too harsh a word to use, even in a modified form, of anything Sandburg has written.

753 : 167. *Sandburg is a socialist,* etc. This is hardly just, for Sandburg is an independent rather than a socialist. He is a student of social conditions, however, and does not hesitate to express his convictions and conclusions.

754 : 193. *gnomic prose.* Condensed or aphoristic writing.

755 : 245. *Croce.* Benedetto Croce (1866—), an Italian philosopher and critic; he wrote a profound treatise on the nature and philosophy of esthetics or art.

756 : 256. *arhythmic.* Not rhythmic, having no regular rhythm.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What three general tendencies or movements in the modern poetical revival are differentiated in the introductory paragraph? What amusing comparison does the author use to illustrate these three tendencies? (2) In which one of the three tendencies would he class Masters? (3) With what New England poet does he compare Masters? In what way have these two poets enlarged the bounds of poetry? (4) What two sorts of magic are expounded in the third paragraph? (5) In which of these types of magic is Masters successful and in which is he unsuccessful? (6) What does this critic find to be the chief weakness of Sandburg's realism? Do you quite agree with this criticism? (7) What has the critic to say about Sandburg's verse forms? Do you think he names sufficient exceptions almost to controvert his criticism? (8) In what rank does he place Sandburg in comparison with Masters, Frost, Gibson, and Masefield? (9) After reading the criticism of Masters and Sandburg here, turn to the selections from these poets, study them closely with the notes before you, and then make up your mind as to whether Aiken is right or wrong in his main points on these two writers. (It would probably be better to study the Aiken essay after you have made the classroom study of the selections from the two poets.)

A Letter to Father Time (Morley, p. 757)

INTRODUCTORY:

For a biographical note on Christopher Morley the student is referred to p. 969. This brilliant young writer first earned fame as "colyumist" or newspaper man. His sense of humor and his delightful way of turning well worn proverbial phrases and literary quotations to new uses attracted to him a host of delighted readers when he began to contribute his brief essays to the Philadelphia *Evening Public Ledger*. The following "Letter to Father Time," written in 1918, admirably illustrates the spontaneous humor and brilliant, scintillating style of the author.

EXPLANATORY:

757 : 13. *babbling of greenbacks.* This is an echo of Falstaff's dying words as reported by Dame Quickly "a' babbled of green fields," *Henry V*, II, iii. The hat-check boys and girls in the large cities frequently accumulate considerable fortunes from their tips.

757 : 24–25. *Charley Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks, General Pershing and Miss Amy Lowell.* You can easily identify these persons. Why were they mentioned as "the great ones of earth" in 1918?

758 : 52. *Nativity, once in the main*, etc. Quoted from Shakespeare's Sonnet LX. The line quoted in the paragraph just below is from Sonnet XII.

758 : 65. *another way of doing you.* Another way of getting the best of Time is to write immortal poetry. Shakespeare makes numerous uses of this thought in his Sonnets.

760 : 117. *Zero Hour.* Note how Morley uses familiar World War terms in this last paragraph, "Zero Hour," "over the top," "No Man's Land," and similar expressions, all with delightful humorous suggestiveness.

760 : 119. *So live*, etc. Beginning as if he were about to quote Bryant's famous conclusion to "Thanatopsis," the essayist very humorously trails off into the flattest of phrases used by country correspondents in the village newspapers, introducing incidentally a delightful pun by merely writing Time with a capital.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What advantage is gained by the essayist in using the epistolary form? (2) Why does he pretend that he prefers to make the new year eve a time of grewsome brooding? (3) What proverbs have maligned Time? (4) What advantages does Time bring? (5) Does Time *give* us our youthful qualities? How is Shakespeare used to prove the point? (6) How are New Year resolutions treated here? (7) How does the writer get fun out of the *Lost* advertisements? (8) Why does the author place an exclamation point after the formal conclusion to his letter?

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE TRANSITIONAL POETS

The established or standard writers of nineteenth century American literature may be said to have finished their work about 1890. The two decades from 1890 to 1910 may be called the transitional period between the older school of the nineteenth century and the newer school of the twentieth century. Mark Twain, O. Henry, and William Vaughn Moody, three writers of prominence in this transitional period, all died in 1910. Illustrative selections from the productions of these three writers were included in *Selections from American Literature*, the book to which this present volume is, in a sense, a supplement. The work of the following group of poets represents a continuation of the older literature and yet points forward to the more distinctly modern or contemporary school. All of the poets represented in this section were born before the Civil War, and almost all of them were either dead or had practically completed their work before 1916, the blossoming time of the "new poetry." These older poets wrote almost entirely in the well established verse forms and attempted no radically new ideas either in the underlying philosophy or the actual subject-matter of their poetry. Of these poets Emily Dickinson belongs chronologically entirely to the nineteenth century, but her work was not published during her life time and not properly evaluated until very recently; hence so far as influence is concerned she belongs in the transitional period. Along with Emily Dickinson we have placed Edwin Markham, John Banister Tabb, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Louise Imogen Guiney, Richard Hovey, and Madison Cawein. For a brief discussion of each of these poets the student is referred to the Introductory Notes which follow.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON EMILY DICKINSON

Emily (Norcross) Dickinson (1830–1886) belongs in time, education, and ideals to the mid-nineteenth century, but in fame, influence, and technique she is distinctly of the twentieth century. Not until 1890, four years after her death in 1886, were selected poems from her accumulated store of manuscript sheets published under the supervision of her friends Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Mabel Loomis Todd. This small volume was so eagerly and quickly bought up that repeated editions were called for. In 1891 and 1896 two other volumes were given to the public, and in 1914 came *The Single Hound*, made up entirely of poems, "poetic flashes . . . . on every great impulse," sent to Emily's "Sister Sue," wife of her brother Austin, who lived "just a hedge away" from the Dickinson home. Not until 1924 were her *Complete Poems* and *The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson*, two large and significant volumes, given to the world by her niece, Mrs. Martha Dickinson Bianchi. During these forty years since Miss Dickinson's death her fame has been steadily growing, so that recently Conrad Aiken, himself a poet and a competent critic, was moved to say "Her poetry is perhaps the finest, by a woman, in the English language," a judgment which in 1923 a well-known English critic heartily concurred in except that he would omit the qualifying adverb "perhaps." If this judgment is sound—and bold indeed would be the critic who would dare to contradict the statement—it behooves us to become acquainted with both the personality and the productions of this most distinguished woman poet. She was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, December 11, 1830. Her father, Edward Dickinson, a lawyer of the highest ideals and integrity of character, served for many years as treasurer of Amherst College. Emily had the restricted education which was offered to young ladies in the female seminaries of the time—the one to which she was sent in South Hadley being particularly designed to prepare young ladies to become "mates" of missionaries. She was of an extremely sensitive and retiring nature, though independent and fearless in defending her intellectual integrity and in working out her own individuality. Before she completed the course in South Hadley Seminary, her father, following the ideals of his forebears, took her out of school and allowed her to assume the round of duties incident to home life. As a girl she was vivacious and witty, and in her young womanhood she seemed destined to take a prominent place in the social life of the college town in which she lived. But at the age of twenty-three she was taken by her father to spend the winter in Washington and near-by cities, and at Philadelphia she met and fell in love with a man whom she could never hope to marry. Stung with a sense of loss, bewildered by the tragic outcome of her one serious love affair, she retired to her father's home at Amherst and shut herself up in seclusion. Her movements henceforth were practically limited by the bounds of her father's homestead. She spent her time in philosophic meditation on the spiritual world and in imaginative observation of the mysteries of life as they were revealed in the beautiful things of nature and in the simple affairs of domestic life around her. Her brother had married and built his home along side of the ancestral place, and Emily became devotedly attached to her brother's wife and children. She gave much of her time to the members of her family, but she rarely saw anyone else, though she did keep up her correspondence with some of her friends. Her misfortune may be said to have made her an artist and a mystic. About 1861 in the midst of her round of household duties she began to write many of these small bits of mystic poetry which are now the intellectual and spiritual stimulant of thousands of readers. She often wrote down her intuitive glimpses into the meaning of life on bits of paper and tied them neatly in small bundles to be secreted, along with her bundles of private letters, in her bureau, or sometimes to be inserted in letters to members of her family or to intimate friends. Never once did she consent to have her work published, though she was often urged by her friends to do so, and in her later years besieged by editors of magazines for contributions to their periodicals. Only a few of her poems were put into cold print during her life, and these were surreptitiously given out through friends whose love was strong enough to risk the poet's resentment. When she lay dying she directed that all her letters and her beloved poems should be destroyed lest a curious world might look too closely into her sensitive and timid soul; but her family very wisely forebore to carry out her dying request, at least so far as the poems were concerned, for which forbearance the world is now duly grateful. Emily had been brought up under the strict religious influence of her Puritan ancestors, and while she never allowed church or creed to dominate her own personality or conduct, she naturally began early in life to grapple with those serious problems that have always engaged the despairing thought of our wisest souls — God, immortality, love, death, nature, time and eternity, human life and destiny. It is not too much to say that in her dainty and poetical way—apparently sometimes fancifully, half-playfully, whimsically—she plumbed depths of thought but barely glimpsed at by her more formally philosophical predecessors and contemporaries of the Victorian era. Her mystical revelations in her terse, thought-laden, penetrative poems are not always easy reading, and yet a child may often catch the meaning readily where a wise man might hesitate. One has frequently to read and con over and over her short swallow-like song notes before the full meaning flashes upon him. But there is almost always intensity, power, light, and not infrequently perfect art in her brief but not altogether unpremeditated bird notes of song. The five short poems given in our text illustrate but inadequately the gems of verse scattered like fiery opals or rich pearls in her collection of over six hundred poetical cameos, many of them perfectly polished, others only partially finished, and some of them apparently left in the rough. Read each poem over until you have caught its message, allowed it to sing to your inner spirit as well as to your outer ear, and then memorize one or two of those you admire most.

Much Madness Is Divinest Sense (Dickinson, p. 761)

INTRODUCTORY:

This little poem presents a striking thought — one illustrated in a way in Emily Dickinson's own case. Because of her retirement — for she rarely left the walls of her father's house after her tragic affair of the heart — some who did not know the facts were led to believe that she was a little queer if not quite insane. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Surely in her own case "Much madness is divinest sense."

The Daisy Follows Soft the Sun (Dickinson, p. 761)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is a perfect example of Emily Dickinson's spiritual song. The first stanza develops a beautiful analogy from nature, and the second makes the application of man's relation to the Eternal. No poet ever loved flowers and birds and all natural objects more than did she, but Nature to her was only an avenue of approach to the divine essence which found expression in everything in the world about her.

There Is No Frigate Like a Book (Dickinson, p. 762)

INTRODUCTORY:

Emily Dickinson was herself a constant and responsive reader of good books. Her letters are full of quotations from and references to the books she loved. The Bible she knew best and quoted most frequently, often with quaint paraphrases of her own. Parts of Shakespeare she also knew intimately. In writing to Colonel T. W. Higginson, whom she almost always addressed as "Dear Master," signing herself "Your Scholar," she wrote: "You inquire my books. For poets, I have Keats, and Mr. and Mrs. Browning. For prose, Mr. Ruskin, Sir Thomas Browne, and the 'Revelations.'" And again she says, "If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that it is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that it is poetry. These are the only two ways I know it. Is there any other way?" She loved also Tennyson and Carlyle and the English women novelists, George Eliot and the Brontë sisters. Among American writers Emerson perhaps held first place with her, but she was also fond of Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell. She declined to read Walt Whitman's book because she was told that it was disgraceful. She took great interest, however, in the productions of many of her contemporaries who are now ranked far below the recluse woman poet in fame—Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Donald G. Mitchell, Josiah G. Holland, Helen Hunt Jackson, and others. In this poem she exalts the power of a book, declaring that the humblest and poorest of imaginative mortals may, by means of a book, take spiritual passage to the land of heart's desire.

Alter? When the Hills Do (Dickinson, p. 762)

INTRODUCTORY:

The theme of this poem is friendship or love. There are three questions asked by three verbs, and these questions are answered by three beautiful analogies drawn from nature. In her own tragic love affair the author proved the truth expressed in this poem. Her niece and biographer, Mrs. Martha Dickinson Bianchi, says of this sudden, inevitable, and unchanging passion, "Certainly in that first witchery of an undreamed southern springtime Emily was overtaken—doomed once and forever by her own heart. It was instantaneous, overwhelming, impossible. There is no doubt but that two predestined souls were kept apart only by her high sense of duty, and the necessity of preserving love untarnished by the inevitable destruction of another woman's life."

I Never Saw a Moor (Dickinson, p. 762)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem illustrates the penetrative power of Emily Dickinson's mind and the fervor of her religious instinct. Though "no one has seen God at any time," through the eye of faith we may see Him and His heaven as plainly as we see, through the power of imagination, a moor or a wave which we have never seen in actuality.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON THE POEMS FROM EMILY DICKINSON:

(1) Give several concrete examples from history to prove that "much madness" may be "divinest sense." (2) In what sense may a book be called a frigate? (3) Give the answers to the three questions "Alter?" "Falter?" "Surfeit?" (4) How does the poet fortify her faith in the existence of God and heaven? (5) In what way does the daisy "follow soft the sun"? At what time in life do men seem most to yearn after a knowledge of God? (6) State the themes of the five poems and tell how the thought is developed in each. (7) Does the poet always arrange her rimes in the same order from stanza to stanza? What "near-rimes" are used in the second and the third selections? (8) Recite from memory your favorite of the five poems.

Evolution and **Killdee** (Tabb, p. 763)

INTRODUCTORY:

John Banister Tabb (1845–1909), usually referred to as "Father Tabb," was born in Richmond, Virginia, obtained a fairly good education, served on a Confederate blockade-runner during the Civil War, and was captured and imprisoned (along with Sidney Lanier, whom he ever afterwards greatly admired) in Point Lookout Prison, became a teacher after the war, was ordained as a Catholic priest at the age of thirty-nine, and spent the remainder of his life teaching literature and writing poetry at the Catholic institution called St. Charles College near Baltimore, Maryland. His eyesight was defective from boyhood, and during the last years of his life he was totally blind, though he never lost his hopeful and buoyant spirit, turning off, in addition to his numerous condensed, but beautiful, religious and nature poems, many clever quips and quiddities, even joking about his misfortune of blindness. His poems are usually short, epigrammatic song flights, but there is almost always a fervent and sparkling quality which makes his lines live in the memory. "Evolution" presents the thought of immortality as a conclusion from a series of flash-like analogies. "Killdee" is a charming bird lyric, illustrating the spiritual application which Father Tabb frequently made in his nature poems. The double notes of the mated marsh birds at twilight suggest to him the memories of the twin birds of Joy and Pain as old age, the twilight of life, approaches.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Read over "Evolution" three times thoughtfully and then repeat it from memory. How does the parallelism of structure help you to retain the thought of the poem? (2) How are the first three contrasted images applied in the last lines? (3) "Who that has ever heard the call of the Killdee at twilight, or the liquid fluting of the wood-robin, will not feel his heart swell as the poet brings them back to memory?" says William Hand Browne in *Library of Southern Literature*. Let some member of the class who has heard this bird's call imitate it for the class. (4) How is the setting of twilight introduced in each of the three stanzas? (5) What application to life is made in the last stanza?

The Man with the Hoe (Markham, p. 764)

INTRODUCTORY:

For a number of years now Edwin Markham has been affectionately called "the dean of American poets." He was born in Oregon City, Oregon, April 23, 1852. When he was five years old, he was taken by his mother to a sheep and cattle ranch in central California. The boy grew up happily in the outdoor world, and soon became a skilled vaquero, or cowboy, in Suisan Hills near the Sacramento River. He managed for several years, however, to get three months' schooling in a little country schoolhouse five miles from his home. Here he developed a love for poetry, and soon he was himself composing verses under the inspiration of Byron, Tennyson, and Bryant. A thirst for knowledge led him eventually to attend the Normal School to prepare himself to be a teacher. He finally became principal of the University of California Observation School at Oakland. It was while he was a teacher here that he wrote his most famous poem, "The Man with the Hoe." So great was the success of the poem that the poet was invited to New York to continue his writing, and here he has since lived. "The Man with the Hoe" first appeared in the *San Francisco Examiner*, and immediately it flashed over America and soon continued its triumphal career over both hemispheres. It was quickly translated into all the important languages of the world, was reprinted in more than 10,000 newspapers and magazines, and was presently hailed as "the battle-cry of the next thousand years." It is a protest and an appeal in behalf of the wretched and oppressed toilers in all lands. Inspired by the painting of Jean François Millet, it is fundamentally an exposition and a description of the power of the artist to betray on canvas the miseries and indignities heaped upon the laboring classes. It expresses in beautifully rhythmic words and with powerful rhetorical emphasis what Millet's picture expresses in color and line. It is essentially an appeal for justice and sympathy for the oppressed workers of the world. Its fiery eloquence and exalted rhetoric place it high among the poems in defense of our common humanity.

EXPLANATORY:

764. *Millet.* Jean François Millet (1814–1875), a French genre-painter. His most famous pictures are "The Sower," "The Angelus," and "The Man with the Hoe."

764 : 24. *Plato.* The ancient Greek philosopher who set forth the doctrine that Good is the absolute and supreme end of all life. He taught that spiritual things are far more real and important than material things.

764 : 24. *Pleiades.* A group of stars in the constellation Taurus, commonly known as "the seven sisters."

Outwitted and **Preparedness** (Markham, pp. 765–766)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here are two poetic epigrams that are worthy of being committed to memory. What command of Christ's does "Outwitted" emphasize? See Matthew v: 44. What two aspects of life are presented in "Preparedness," and under what familiar metaphor?

Our Israel — To the Memory of Poe (Markham, p. 766)

INTRODUCTORY:

In 1925 the *English Poetry Review* of London offered a prize of $500 for the best poem on Edgar Allan Poe. Over four hundred manuscripts were submitted from all parts of the world. It is not surprising that Edwin Markham, though now seventy-three years old, won the prize, for he has long been a lover and student of Poe, having written an essay on "The Art and Genius of Poe" as an introduction to the Cameo edition of Poe's works in 1904. The committee which adjudged the prize to Markham was composed of nine distinguished British and American poets and editors. The complete poem consists of four parts and contains 104 lines. We are permitted here to reprint the fourth or climax section, which is a beautiful apostrophe complete in itself. The entire poem was printed in the *New York Times Book Review*, June 7, 1925. It will be included in Markham's *Collected Poems*. now in preparation for the press (1926).

EXPLANATORY:

766 : 10. *For beauty's bread we gave a stone.* See Matthew VII : 9.

766 : 13. *Israfel.* The angel of music. (See Poe's poem "Israfel" on page 404 and also the note on page 596 of the present editor's *Selections from American Literature.*) Markham here identifies Poe with the angel Israfel.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON THE POEMS FROM EDWIN MARKHAM:

(1) Study closely the reproduction of Millet's picture, "The Man with the Hoe," and then read the opening stanza of the poem. What emotions do the poet's words and the painter's picture arouse in you? (2) Why does the poet speak of the man with the hoe as "the Thing"? (3) How far below the possibilities of the man has this being fallen? Read the second and third stanzas to find your answer. (4) You will note that at the end of each of the first three stanzas there is a suggestion of warning to the world. In the fourth and fifth stanzas the warning and appeal to the rulers of the world are directly made. The poem, then, is essentially divided into two main thoughts, namely, the picture of the oppressed laborer and the warning to the world that, unless due relief is given, this "dumb" Terror will rise and after the silence of centuries right all wrongs. (5) The poem is written in blank verse. In the sweep of its style, this blank verse may be compared with that of Bryant's "Thanatopsis." To conclude your study, read the poem again in an elevated tone of solemn pity and profound warning. (6) Recite "Outwitted" and "Preparedness" from memory. Which of the two epigrams do you like better? (7) How is Poe's supreme aim in life summarized in the first stanza of "Our Israfel"? (8) How are the facts of his life summarized in the second stanza? (9) What appeal is made in the third and fourth stanzas? (10) Why does Markham call Poe Israfel?

Tears, A Girl's Mood, and **A Little Song of Life** (Reese, pp. 767–768)

INTRODUCTORY:

Lizette Woodworth Reese (1856—) was born in Baltimore and educated in private schools. For most of her long life she served as a teacher of English in the Western High School of her native city.

She began early to publish her tender and highly finished lyrics, and fortunately she has lived to continue her work to the present time. Her volumes are *A Branch of May* (1887), *A Handful of Lavender* (1891), *A Quiet Road* (1896), *Wayside Lute* (1909), *Spicewood* (1920), *Wild Cherry* (1923), *Selected Poems* (1926). A bronze tablet inscribed with her poem, "Tears," has been placed in the Western High School of Baltimore. This poem has been pronounced by competent critics as one of the finest sonnets ever written in America. It appeared first in *Scribner's Magazine* for November, 1899. On the day the check for, and notice of acceptance of, the poem reached Miss Reese crepe hung on her door, her father having died only a few hours before. "A Girl's Mood" is a light song lyric which delicately suggests the instincts of a young girl who loves religious service, nature, home, and beautiful things, and who would most of all love a lover if she only had one. "A Little Song of Life," a simple song of good cheer, brings out clearly Miss Reese's optimism and high ethical idealism.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What view of life is presented in the octave (first eight lines) of the sonnet "Tears"? Enumerate the beautiful sequence of images (six) by which this view of life is presented. (2) What question is implied in the eighth line, and how is this question answered in the sestet (last six lines)? (3) How does the appeal to "Chieftains, and bards (Homer), and keepers of the sheep (David)" satisfy the poet as to the ultimate "idleness of tears"? Do you find a hint of immortality in the poem? (4) Explain the references in the last line. (5) Now state the theme of the sonnet (implied in the title), and say whether the poem as a whole is optimistic or pessimistic. (6) Work out the rime scheme and the logical structure of the thought, and say whether the sonnet is English or Italian in form. (7) In "A Girl's Mood" how old do you imagine the girl to be? (8) What image represents her religious instinct? What her love of nature? What her domestic instinct? What her desire for beauty? (9) What does she desire most of all, and what would she give for this if she only had it? (10) Is the poem accurately suggestive of the average high-school girl's mood? (11) What repeated word in the first stanza of "A Little Song of Life" strikes the dominant tone of the lyric, and how is this word made especially emphatic? (12) Of what does the second stanza suggest that life is made up? (13) What is the only way that each one of us can make sure of real success in life (last stanza)?

The Wild Ride (Guiney, p. 769)

INTRODUCTORY:

Louise Imogen Guiney (1861–1920), born in Boston and educated in Elmhurst Academy, Providence, Rhode Island, and by private tutors, was a remarkably cultured woman. She devoted her life to meditation and scholarly research. In 1901 she left Boston and took up her residence in a very much more ancient center of culture, living near Oxford, England, until her death in 1920. She wrote many beautiful and penetrative essays on literary subjects, edited several notable but little known literary masterpieces, and was a poet, if not of the first rank certainly very near to it. She began publishing her poetry in 1887 with the *White Sail and Other Poems*, and followed it with *A Roadside Harp* (1893), probably her best volume. Her later volumes of verse are *The Martyr's Idyl and Shorter Poems* (1899), and *Happy Ending* (1909). She was ardent in her religious faith, being a steadfast adherent to the Roman Catholic Church. In her literary work she maintained a high ideal, never writing a mean or shoddy line nor espousing the cause of a poor craftsman. Her work is perhaps too refined and cultured ever to make a wide popular appeal, but the better class of readers will always turn to her productions with delight. We have chosen here one of her simpler poems, a lyric full of the high exultation and swift movement of the wild ride which it celebrates. The poem presents in reality more the mystic journey of the spirit or the imagination in the realm of ideals than a physical ride, and it ends with the characteristic note of religious faith which animated Miss Guiney's whole life.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does the poet suggest the wild ride of the spirit in the opening refrain? The fundamental rhythm is anapestic. Note the regularity of the rhythmic pattern of the three opening lines with its combination of iambic and anapestic feet (◡′|◡◡′‖◡′|◡◡′|◡◡′|◡). Other lines show slight variations from this pattern, but the whole poem is fundamentally anapestic in rhythm and suggests the galloping feet of the invisible horses. (2) What period of history is suggested to you by the details of the succeeding stanzas? (3) Compare this poem with other riding pieces, such as Browning's "Cavalier Tunes," "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix," Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride," Miller's "Kit Carson's Ride," and others. In what particular does Miss Guiney's poem have the advantage of all these poems celebrating physical rides?

Unmanifest Destiny and **At the Crossroads** (Hovey, pp. 770–771)

INTRODUCTORY:

Though born in Illinois, Richard Hovey (1864–1900) belongs by training and residence to the East. He prepared himself for the ministry, but turned to the stage and the lecture platform and finally through journalism to a literary career. He was a lecturer on literature at Barnard College and Columbia University when in 1900 he died at the age of thirty-six. He was the most aspiring of the younger poets of the 'nineties, attempting to rival the greatest English poets both in choice of subjects and in treatment. He wrote Greek odes, Arcadian lyrics, stirring patriotic pieces, and many convivial songs and occasional poems; he dared to add a new canto to Byron's "Don Juan"; he entered Tennyson's field of Arthurian legends and planned a series of nine dramatic poems, which, had he lived to complete them, might have challenged comparison with Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, though they were cast in dramatic rather than epic form. Besides three successive volumes of lyrics under the title of *Songs of Vagabondia* (1894–1896–1900), written in collaboration with Bliss Carman, the Canadian poet, he wrote two books of lyrics called *Along the Trail* (1898) and *To the End of the Trail*, the latter being published eight years after his death. Of the nine Arthurian dramas planned to appear under the general title of *Launcelot and Guinevere* he completed four and left a fifth in fragmentary form. Some of Hovey's war poems, written during the Spanish-American War, show a somewhat jingoish spirit, but we should remember that he was still a young man, and for this reason at least condone, even if we cannot entirely agree with, his enthusiastic militaristic spirit. His "Unmanifest Destiny," written at the conclusion of the Spanish-American War when our country was just entering upon a colonial policy through the acquirement of the Philippine Islands, is a serious treatment of the familiar phrase current at the time, "the manifest destiny of America." The other poem, "At the Crossroads," illustrates the poet's strong social instincts and is a good example of the intense emotional style of his poems on comradeship and similar themes.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What battles of two earlier American wars are referred to in stanzas three and four of "Unmanifest Destiny"? (2) What document is referred to in "The trumpet word of Jefferson"? (3) To what power does the poet ascribe the "unmanifest destiny" of the United States? (4) How is his faith in the ultimate destiny of our country expressed in the last stanza? (5) What is the theme of "At the Crossroads"? (6) What similarity of thought do you find underlying the two poems from Hovey?

Snow, Sounds and Sights, and **The Lesson** (Cawein, pp. 773-774)

INTRODUCTORY:

Madison (Julius) Cawein (1865-1914) was born in Louisville, Kentucky, lived as a boy near New Albany, Indiana, and finally returned to Louisville, where he completed his high-school education and lived until his death in 1914. Early in life he showed great interest in and love for nature and romance. During his school days he read widely in both prose and poetry, and he began at this time to transform his school exercises, as well as his observations on nature, into simple rimes. His teacher, Reuben Post Halleck, encouraged the boy poet to write long imitative pieces after the manner of such poets as Scott, Keats, Coleridge, and Tennyson; so we might naturally expect to find that when he began to develop his own style in later years it would prove to be largely of the romantic and lyrical type illustrated by his early masters. He was particularly successful in his descriptions of nature. He was accustomed to stroll about in the woods and meadows and compose stanzas as he walked, jotting them down from time to time in his notebooks. His enthusiastic appreciation of the beauty of the natural world about him was spontaneous and exhilarating, and he often succeeded admirably in transferring this enthusiasm and exhilaration to his readers. His first volume was *Blooms of the Berry* (1887). William Dean Howells, the eminent critic and novelist, reviewed this volume favorably and continued throughout the poet's life to estimate his work highly; and later Joyce Kilmer hailed Cawein as one of the permanent lyrists in American literature. Since the arrival of the so-called "new poetry," however, Cawein's fame has somewhat declined. He wrote rapidly and without apparent effort, publishing during his life more than twenty volumes of verse. His fluency no doubt led him to spread his talent out too thin in these twenty-odd volumes, and yet there is no question but that the best of his nature lyrics will be long cherished by the lovers of simple poetic melodies and charming outdoor scenes. The lyrics in our text illustrate the poet's ability to extract pure joy from all aspects of nature. "Snow" gives us a night scene in mid-winter; "Sounds and Sights" reproduces the charm and beauty of early spring; "The Lesson" is somewhat more serious and ethical, but it, too, draws an image from nature in each stanza.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What details of the winter scene are developed successively in the three stanzas of "Snow"? (2) What is the dominant tone of this poem? (3) With the title "Sounds and Sights" in mind, divide the second poem into its two parts. (4) Why are the leaves appropriate for the sounds and the buds for the sights? (5) Work out in detail the parallelism in the verse pattern of "Sounds and Sights." (6) In the third poem what lesson does the poet learn from Beauty (lines 3 and 4)? How is this lesson illustrated from nature (line 2)? (7) What does he find coming from passion (line 8)? What illustration does he draw from nature in this second stanza?

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO "VOICES OF THE NEW AMERICA"

The decade from 1869 to 1879, or in round numbers the eighteen-seventies, records the birth of the six chief poets of what is called "the new American poetry"—Edwin Arlington Robinson and Edgar Lee Masters having been born in 1869, Amy Lowell in 1874, Robert Frost in 1875, and Carl Sandburg in 1878, and Vachel Lindsay in 1879. It was about the middle of the second decade of the twentieth century, or 1914 to 1916, that the full bloom of this new group of major poets appeared, the youngest of the group, Vachel Lindsay, leading off with *The Congo and Other Poems* (1914), Frost following with *North of Boston* (1914), Masters with *Spoon River Anthology* (1915), Amy Lowell with *Men, Women and Ghosts* (1916), Robinson with *The Man Against the Sky* (1916), and Sandburg with *Chicago and Other Poems* (1916). The first volume of the Imagist group, *Des Imagistes*, appeared in 1914, and was followed by three successive annual volumes of *Some Imagist Poets* in 1915, 1916, and 1917; and the series of annual anthologies called *Others* began in 1916 and continued for several years. This last series was sponsored by Alfred Kreymborg and other poets who were not included in the Imagist group. Numerous other important individual volumes of poems appeared between 1914 and 1916, so that we may be justified in calling this short period in the middle of the second decade of the present century the birth time of the "new American poetry." Dropping Amy Lowell out of the list to reserve her for later treatment as the leader of "The Imagists," and reserving also the poets represented in the *Others* anthologies for treatment among "The Lyrists" and "The Experimenters," we may say that the five remaining major poets are distinctly "Voices of the New America." Each one of these poets has voiced or interpreted some phase of modern American life peculiar to his own environment, temperament, and poetic genius.

Edwin Arlington Robinson, the oldest and in a sense the greatest of the group, had already long been practising his own peculiar style of poetry, but his most representative volume, *The Man Against the Sky*, appeared in 1916. With his mordant pessimism and gloomy outlook on life he has interpreted most poignantly the decadent, the futile, the hopeless decline of the surviving Puritan types of New England. The relics of a past civilization interest him profoundly. He studies the derelicts and failures of his Tilbury Town with an almost morbid curiosity, but also with penetrating insight and profound art. Though he portrays primarily the decadent Puritan element in present-day New England life, though like the prophet of old he exclaims, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," yet a close reader may find in the dark pictures ample stimulation for the heroic struggle which these characters make against an adverse fate.

Edgar Lee Masters is by nature a satirist. He sees the dark, weak, wicked, sinful side of humanity, and he voices it in all its crass realism and repulsive vulgarity, but always with the purpose of correcting or improving its present conditions. Every age must have its satirist, its fierce and relentlessly cynical critic, and Masters fulfills admirably this function for our time. His interpretation of American life is profound because it is based on actual observation and experience. As a practising lawyer he has seen the darker side of our social, industrial, religious, and political life, and he has had the courage to present without reserve the facts as he sees them. That he overemphasizes or exaggerates the crudity, repulsiveness, wickedness of village life is apparent, but an artist always may assume the privilege of exaggeration in order to drive his point home. Spoon River is not typical of all American villages, but that there is at least some truth in the indictment of hypocrisy, banality, vulgarity, and crime which Masters brings in against the small town, few will deny. Masters, then, satirizes the crass animalism, the low ideals, the superficial culture, and the rampant materialism of modern American life.

Robert Frost, like Robinson, is another interpreter of decadent New England life, but he presents it in an entirely different tone and from an entirely different point of view. He shows a closer sympathy, a greater appreciation of and love for the rural people of his "North of Boston" region than does Robinson for the broken fragments of humanity in his Tilbury Town. Frost's temperament is more consistently optimistic, and hence his interpretation of the decadent New England life is more sympathetic and less coldly intellectual and judicial. His intelligence informs him that the relics of the older New England types are stationary, non-progressive, even deteriorating or retrograding under the strain of existence on their bleak farms; but he loves these relics of Puritanism, he enjoys the sombre view of the bleak hills and worn-out farms of Vermont and New Hampshire; and hence he voices sympathetically the spirit of a dear but dead past.

Carl Sandburg is the voice of Chicago and the midwest prairies. His is a modern note—modern in its diction, modern in its realism, modern in its philosophy. Derived from illiterate Swedish stock, born to a life of poverty and hard manual labor, he is in a peculiar sense the voice of the people, the masses. His is, then, more than any other of our time, a democratic voice. In his own peculiar idiom he depicts and defends the workers, the toilers, the suffering lower half of humanity, and attacks the selfishness, snobbery, and greed of the luxury-loving upper half. By nature he is a lover of freedom and fair play, a worshiper of the strong man who is also the tender man. His beloved Chicago is the "Hog-Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads." And yet in spite of the fact that Chicago is the "stormy, husky, brawling city of the big shoulders," there are flashes of beauty to be found in it. The titles of his books are indicative of the life he voices—*Chicago*, *Cornhuskers*, *Smoke and Steel*, *Slabs of the Sunburnt West*. Truly Sandburg is the voice of the mid-west and its democratic masses.

Vachel Lindsay voices the aspiration, the religious fervor, the evangelistic impulse, the reforming idealism of our middle classes. He has his own peculiar way of reviving interest in oral poetry by minstrel-like chanting. But primarily he uses his rimed orations, his spectacular recitations, his higher vaudeville and jazz music, his mystical drawings, to arouse the people to a profounder spiritual life. His is the voice of the reincarnated Anglo-Saxon priest and minstrel, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Repent, reform, renew your spiritual and religious fervor." In his own way he is an inspirer and interpreter of the fundamental religious instincts of our people.

The following Introductory notes to each of these five poets, these *Voices of the New America*, will further elucidate their individual personalities and their unique contributions to our present-day literature.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

The oldest in point of publication and, by practically unanimous consent of the leading critics both radical and conservative, the profoundest and therefore greatest, of our living American poets is Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869—). He is by no means the most popular poet, for there are several of his contemporaries who have perhaps a hundred readers to his one; and there are several journalistic rimesters who have perhaps ten thousand readers to his one. But this does not mean that in the long run Robinson will not have as many readers as all the popular newspaper poets put together, for his best poems will in all probability last on through the centuries and be read by generations yet unborn, while the productions of the lighter rimesters will pass into oblivion within a few decades. Not many young readers will at first like Robinson's poetry, but we can confidently advise all who aspire to read the best that is being written in our times to cultivate a taste for this great artist's work. Edwin was born at Head Tide, a small village in Maine, in 1869. His family moved to Gardiner, a somewhat larger town, when he was about three years old, and here he grew up and went to the town schools. Gardiner, which becomes Tilbury Town in Robinson's books, is an old-fashioned Puritan town with something of the gloomy atmosphere of the earlier Puritan settlers still hanging over it, but something of the quiet old-world beauty too. This quiet beauty and this Puritanic gloom evidently had a strong influence on the sensitive youth, for we see many phases of its drab life reflected in the dark, melancholy, almost cynical, and yet at times supremely beautiful, pictures in much of the poet's later work. After finishing at the village high school, young Robinson entered Harvard College in 1891, but at the end of his second year he was called home on account of his father's illness. For four or five years the young man busied himself with reading and composing poetry. He printed privately a small volume in 1896, *The Torrent and the Night Before.* While the book made no impression, its appearance has been pronounced the most significant event in American literature since Whitman's *Leaves of Grass.* In 1897 came another volume which was coldly received at the time but which has since grown in favor so steadily that it is now recognized as a distinct contribution to our literature, namely, *The Children of the Night* (1897, re-issued 1905). Here were the first of those remarkably illuminative, incisive, and concentrated character sketches which eventually led to Robinson's elevation to his present high position among our poets. "Richard Cory," "John Evereldown," "Luke Havergal," "Aaron Stark" are just a few of the more memorable portraits in this volume. The poet needed the inspiration of the great city, and so he moved down to New York and engaged in various sorts of clerical work while he was slowly beating out his next volume of poetry. This was *Captain Craig* (1902), which, besides the long title poem, contains "Isaac and Archibald," a charming piece of portraiture of two old men of Tilbury Town, presented from the reminiscent point of view of a twelve-year-old boy. Again his admirers were made to wait a number of years for the poet's next volume. In 1910 *The Town Down the River* appeared, and it was heralded by the critics as a book of real poetic value, but still the public failed to respond in any large way to this strange new poet. Then Robinson tried his hand at writing prose plays, *Van Zorn* and *The Porcupine* being the titles of his efforts in this kind of literature. Failing to make a success in this direction, he returned to his poetry, and in 1916 brought out his best volume, *The Man Against the Sky.* From the publication of this volume Robinson began to be recognized as the greatest artist in present-day American poetry. Of course some critics favor one or another of our poets, Frost, or Sandburg, or Amy Lowell, or even Masters or Lindsay, but all are agreed that Robinson, if not popularly recognized as the very greatest, at least stands the best chance to be so recognized by posterity. Other volumes followed more rapidly: *Merlin* (1917), *Lancelot* (1920), *The Three Taverns* (1920), *Avon's Harvest* (1921), *Collected Poems* (1922), for the last of which the poet received the Pulitzer prize of $1,000 awarded annually through Columbia University for the best volume of native verse. He has recently published two long narrative poems, subtle psychological novels in verse, namely, *Roman Bartholow* (1923) and *The Man Who Died Twice* (1924). Then came *Dionysus in Doubt and Other Poems* (1925); and *Tristram* (1927), the third of his long love stories based on the Arthurian cycle, *Merlin* and *Lancelot* being the other two. This poet has sometimes been called the Browning of American poetry, not because he imitates Browning, but because he is sometimes quite as baffling to twentieth-century readers as Browning was to nineteenth-century readers. There is a dark and depressing tone in much of his poetry; but if he often studies tragic figures, he now and then lights them up with a touch of humor and sometimes even with a note of hope. He often finds success in what the world calls failure, and his final verdict on life, even if he sees its darker side more frequently than its brighter, is that there is some far-off divine event toward which the soul of man moves. He lives quietly his bachelor life, spending his winters in New York and his summers in

Peterboro, N. H. He never appears on the lecture platform and never seeks popular applause, though he has received many honors in recent years, among others the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature from Yale University in 1922. He goes steadily on his way as one set apart to the single purpose of writing poetry.

Richard Cory (Robinson, p. 775)

INTRODUCTORY:

The concentrated portrait sketches in *The Children of the Night* (1897) were among the first of their kind in American poetry. Later Edgar Lee Masters made his fame with *Spoon River Anthology*, a volume of similar character sketches in free verse, though Masters had not at the time he wrote his book even read Robinson's earlier sketches. Robinson never writes free verse, contenting himself with the well-known forms—the sonnet, the rondeau, the triolet—and the regular rhythms of standard English poetry. But he is modern in his diction and in his imagery. He rarely or never uses a trite figure, an archaic expression, or a well-worn poetic phrase. He tells his story simply and directly in rime or blank verse, but he is not always simple in his thought, and hence not always easy to comprehend. "Richard Cory," however, is not difficult, and it is a good poem to begin with if you want to learn to appreciate Robinson's art. Here we have a straightforward, highly finished portrait of what appears to be a very happy and successful man. We are led quite up to the close of the poem with this favorable portrait, and then suddenly, like the crash of the pistol which ended the useless life, comes the suicide on "one calm summer night." There is a tone of profound irony in the poem. The rich Richard Cory was after all a failure and blew his brains out, while the common people—even though they waited for the light, went without meat, and cursed the bread—lived on.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why did the people always look at Richard Cory when he went down town? (2) Describe him. (3) What is the force of the words *fluttered pulses* and *glittered?* (4) How is the poverty of the people who looked at and admired Richard brought out in lines 13 and 14? (5) Which is after all frequently the happier, the poor man or the rich man?

Miniver Cheevy (Robinson, p. 775)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is one of the lighter, more humorous portraits in Robinson's gallery of notable characters. In almost every community there is some character who seems to belong to a previous age, a character "born too late." The feminine rimes in the second and fourth lines of each stanza add distinctly to the playfully ironic tone of the description. Note also the effective fourth line of each stanza, which has only two stresses.

EXPLANATORY:

776 : 11. *Thebes and Camelot.* Both of these were ancient cities in which were centered numerous old myths and romances. Thebes was in ancient Boeotia; Camelot in ancient England, the seat of the mythical King Arthur's court.

776 : 12. *Priam's neighbors.* Priam was the last king of ancient Troy and is frequently mentioned in old Greek legends, particularly in Homer's *Iliad.*

776 : 17. *Medici.* A famous family of sixteenth-century Italy, associated with many tragic and romantic events.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Robinson has a peculiar way of expressing himself. For example, instead of saying "while he lived" he says "while he assailed the seasons." What does "iron clothing," line 24, mean? (2) What particular things did Miniver Cheevy love and sigh for? (3) What had happened to Romance and Art in the modern practical age in which Miniver lived? (4) Why is *khaki* chosen to be contrasted with *iron clothing?* (5) What is apparently the only thing for one "born too late" to do in these modern times? (6) Can you detect the quiet humor and irony which plays through this poem? Read the stanzas aloud, trying to bring out the irony and incongruity of the situation.

The Master (Robinson, p. 777)

INTRODUCTORY:

"The Master," the most penetrative of all the poems on Lincoln, appeared as the initial poem in the 1910 volume, *The Town Down the River.* In a footnote the poet explains that the poem is supposed to be spoken by one of Lincoln's contemporaries not long after the Civil War. There is a remarkable epigrammatic compression and weightiness in the style of these lines, and the young reader will have to use his best endeavor to read the poem intelligently. Imagine one of Lincoln's well-dressed, well-educated, supposedly important contemporaries beginning suddenly to realize that the awkward, angular, uncultured leader was after all the master man of his time and would live on and on, long after his better-groomed and more highly polished contemporaries were forgotten. Study the poem closely, striving to catch the meaning of the closely packed lines and the profoundly penetrative analysis of the character of the great leader.

EXPLANATORY:

777 : 9. *when days were perilous.* Lincoln first came into national prominence in the Lincoln-Douglas debates during the campaign for the Republican nomination for one of the senatorial seats from Illinois in 1858. Why were those days perilous?

777 : 25. *We gave a glamour to the task.* That is, the people thought it would be an easy matter to conquer the South.

778 : 56. *As with inept, Icarian wings.* That is, with weak or failing wings. The legendary Greek inventor, Daedalus, was imprisoned with his son Icarus by King Minos of Crete. So closely were the prisoners guarded that there seemed no hope of escape. Daedalus, however, secretly contrived for himself and Icarus wings which were attached to their bodies by wax, and the two started to fly across the sea to Athens. Icarus was warned not to fly too near the sun, but in his joy of flight he soared too high, the sun melted the wax, and the boy fell into the sea. The application here is, of course, that the lesser men were not endowed with power of insight equal to that of Lincoln, and hence they could not hold themselves in the safe and steady line of flight which "the master" chose.

778: 57. *For we were not as other men,* etc. This is a difficult stanza. The meaning is about as follows: Even we were above the ordinary run of mankind, for we were able to soar; but he could do more, for he could see, could penetrate the mystery of the great problem of the time. We shall come down pleasantly (that is, more pleasantly than did Icarus referred to in the preceding stanza) and probably be remembered kindlily in history. But we shall all know henceforth what it really means to be sublime, since we have seen sublimity in the master; and we shall all gain some renown in our perigee (*perigee* is the point in the orbit of the moon where it approaches nearest the earth), because we were close to the great soul of Lincoln; and we realize now that there can be but one supremely great personality (*Titan*) at any one time in the world's history.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How did Lincoln's name first come prominently before the public (stanza 1)? (2) At what perilous time did Lincoln come? (3) How did Lincoln look on his contemporaries (line 12)? Why is he described as both *mild* and *untamable?* (4) Did the people at first have confidence in Lincoln (line 15)? (5) What did Lincoln recognize about his critics (stanza 3)? (6) Did the people realize the gravity of the situation? Did Lincoln realize it (stanza 4)? (7) What qualities did the world later see in Lincoln's face (stanza 5)? What is meant by "the face never young and never wholly old"? (8) The antecedent of *they* in line 53 is *love, grandeur, fame, patience.* In the last part of the sixth stanza how does the poet illustrate the fact that Lincoln's fame has outflown all the assumed self-importance of his contemporaries? Tell the story of Daedalus and Icarus. (9) Analyze the seventh stanza (see note on line 56 above). (10) Compare this portrait of Lincoln with "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight" (Lindsay), p. 810, and with other Lincoln poems that you may find, such as Markham's "Lincoln, the Man of the People," Fletcher's "Lincoln," and others.

Calvary (Robinson, p. 779)

INTRODUCTORY:

Robinson has written many excellent sonnets, some of them miniature portrait sketches like "Aaron Stark" and "Cliff Klingenhagen," or literary portraits like "Thomas Hood" and "George Crabbe," or nature sonnets like "Monadnoc through the Trees" and "The Pity of the Leaves," and philosophic or religious sonnets like "Credo" and "Calvary." This last is one of his simpler early efforts in this difficult verse form. It is an excellent example of the thoroughly unified sonnet, the octave (first eight lines) being devoted to the physical crucifixion of Christ, and the sestet (last six lines) developing the application to our own time when the spiritual crucifixion of Christ continues. Work out the logical structure and the rime arrangement, and study carefully the vivid picture in the first movement and the impassioned appeal in the second movement.

Flammonde (Robinson, p. 779)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is the initial poem in Robinson's 1916 volume, *The Man Against the Sky.* It is a character sketch of the "Prince of Castaways," a man who, like Tennyson's King Arthur, came from no one knows where and who likewise disappeared into the Unknown. In a way Flammonde symbolizes the soul of humanity. The very form of his name (Flam-monde, "flame of the world") suggests a symbolic or spiritual interpretation. He makes no pretense to wealth, position, power, or greatness, but by the force of his personality he attracts admiration and confidence, and he goes about his little world in Tilbury Town (Gardiner, Maine) doing good deeds, saving a woman's reputation, sending a promising youth to college, reconciling the quarrels of his neighbors, and so forth. His life was "an apparent failure," but a genuine success. To understand "Flammonde" fully, one must connect it with the very difficult philosophic poem at the end of the book in which it appears, namely, "The Man Against the Sky." In this poem Robinson portrays a human soul silhouetted against the western horizon and going down into death. What becomes of such a soul as Flammonde's we can only conjecture, but Robinson finally concludes that there must be some future for the soul, for though

> We've each a darkening hill to climb . . . .
> If after all that we have lived and thought,
> All comes to Nought—
> If there be nothing after Now,
> And we know that—why live?
>
> From *The Man Against the Sky*

You will find the first line of the preceding quotation imbedded also in the last stanza of "Flammonde."

EXPLANATORY:

781 : 44. *a long-faded scarlet fringe.* That is, a reminiscence of some indiscretion or act of unchastity in her youth. Compare Hester Prynne's sin in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter.*

781 : 48. *Could hide or find our littleness.* That is, we could not *hide* our feeling of contempt for the unhappy woman, nor realize (*find*) our own littleness of soul in that we were not Christ-like enough to overcome this feeling.

782 : 86. *Nourish an ethical unrest.* That is, worry about the ethics of the man's conduct, for (as the next two lines declare) it is rare that nature produces such a soul or allows him to live long in this world, and he knew what was best for him.

782 : 89–96. These lines suggest that while life may be hard and dark, the soul yet looks forward to immortality beyond the grave. This interpretation is strengthened by the closing lines of *The Man Against the Sky*, a few of which are quoted in the Introductory Note above.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Give an analysis of the character Flammonde as revealed in the first five stanzas—his origin, his appearance, his way of living, and his influence on his neighbors. What phrase in the third stanza seems best to summarize the character? (2) What three instances (four persons) of Flammonde's good deeds are given in stanzas 6, 7, and 8? (3) In the last four stanzas what question does the poet raise about the human soul and particularly about the soul of a man like Flammonde? Can we ever fully understand the mystery of life? (Questions 1, 2, and 3 will suggest to you an outline of the whole poem.)

(4) What, do you think, is Robinson's final answer as to whether or not there is a future for the soul? (5) How do you like such a poem as this? Does it make you think more seriously than do most poems?

The Dark Hills (Robinson, p. 782)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is one of the most beautiful of all Robinson's shorter poems. The solemn beauty of the far western hills as they fade into darkness induces thoughts of dead warriors and the ending of all wars. Read the poem aloud until you catch the full force of its lovely imagery and solemn thoughts.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON EDGAR LEE MASTERS

The story of Edgar Lee Masters' life is that of one born to be a writer but hindered by parental objections and adverse circumstances. No obstacle could finally daunt or prevent him from pouring out the thoughts that came surging through his mind like the turbid waters of a wild freshet stream. Descended from pioneers out of Virginia and New England, he was born in the small village of Garnet, Kansas, in 1869 and taken when he was about a year old to Petersburg, Illinois. Here the boy attended the public school. New Salem, a village near by, was the place where Abraham Lincoln once lived and met, at the tavern where he boarded, Anne Rutledge, the girl whom Masters celebrates in his most famous epitaph (see below). In 1880 the Masters family moved to Lewistown, Illinois. Here the boy attended a small college for a while and then began to read law in his father's office. He wanted a college education, but he was not encouraged in his desire. Finally the father consented to give the youth a chance, and sent him for one year to Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois. Here Masters continued his study of the classics and read much history. He had an ambition to become a writer and was continually making verses on classic models, but he was urged by his father to take up the study of law. This he did, and in 1891 he was admitted to the bar. Later he moved to Chicago and made a success of the practice of his profession, being at one time the law partner of Clarence Darrow. Nothing could stop Masters from writing, however, and in 1898 he published his first volume of verse. He wrote a number of plays and many essays, several volumes of which were published, but they made little or no impression on the public. He was mainly imitating his favorite authors or trying to express his crude ideas of historical and imaginative characters. About 1914 he came under the influence of William Marion Reedy, editor of *Reedy's Mirror*, St. Louis, who advised him to quit imitating the conventional and write something modern and realistic out of his own experience. The *Greek Anthology* was suggested as a model. Masters had always been passionately fond of Greek, and the suggestion that he write some modern epitaphs in the manner of the *Greek Anthology* at once took root in his mind. *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse*, had now been printing examples of the new imagistic free verse since 1912, and it is said that with these free-verse poems as models and the *Greek Anthology* as inspiration Masters began to write the epitaphs of the simple village folk buried in Spoon River, which is the name he gave to Lewistown near Spoon River. Reedy at once recognized the power and possibilities of these terse free-verse epitaphs, and he encouraged Masters to proceed. Between May and November, 1914, he had published over two hundred epitaphs in *Reedy's Mirror*, and in 1915 *Spoon River Anthology* appeared and immediately sprang into public favor, over 50,000 copies being sold. Then Masters began to collect his other poetry and to issue volume after volume: *Songs and Satires* (1916), *The Great Valley* (1916), *Toward the Gulf* (1918), *Starved Rock* (1919), *Domesday Book* (1920), *The Open Sea* (1921). These books all contain some strong work, but the material as a whole is uneven and disappointing, and far below *Spoon River Anthology* in novelty and poetic inspiration. *Domesday Book*, a coroner's study of the suicide of a passionate young woman named Elenor Murray, is the most ambitious of them all, and in many respects it is a notable contribution to the literature of our time. Recently Masters has returned to the Spoon River motive and produced over three hundred epitaphs in *The New Spoon River* (1923), and in 1925 he brought out *Selected Poems*, a volume designed to bring together the best examples of the various themes and styles from his voluminous published works. And in 1926 appeared *Lee, A Dramatic Poem*, a fervid tribute to the character and greatness of the noble southern general. In the meantime Masters published several novels, only one of which we need mention here. *Mitch Miller* (1920), a boy's story modeled somewhat after Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*. This book throws much light on Masters' own boyhood experiences and should be read by those who become interested in the poet or who want to get a prose picture of much that we find in poetic form in *Spoon River Anthology*. Masters is sometimes careless and inaccurate in his diction and his sentence structure, but these lapses are mere trifles which we can condone in a writer of power. What this poet has done which is of prime importance is to enlarge the bounds of poetry by introducing into it the crass realism and gross wickedness of the drab life of many of our American villages. He portrays life as he sees it, real life with all its foibles and faults upon it. He is by nature a satirist, and hence he naturally exaggerates the evil; but his purpose is a noble one. He himself has set down his aim in all that he has done: "I have written no line without either the purpose to give delight or to enlighten and lift the world on its way."

Slip Shoe Lovey (Masters, p. 783)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is an excellent example of Masters' work in a lighter vein. He rarely attempts a humorous portrait, but here we have a delightful picture of a slovenly house girl, evidently drawn from life. The poem appeared in *The Great Valley* (1916).

The Idiot (Masters, p. 785)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is a symbolic reflective poem. It sets forth the idea that we resent death as a horrible intruder, when in reality death may be but an angel in disguise, bringing us rest and peace. Death is no respecter of persons, for he strikes down the children at play as well as the middle-aged and the old. The two pictures given here form a remarkable contrast. Whether we are repelled by the horrible grinning figure of death or whether we accept him as an angel depends on the point of view. This poem is from *Songs and Satires.*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON THE SPOON RIVER SELECTIONS

The first three of the following epitaphs are taken from *Spoon River Anthology* (1915); the others are from *The New Spoon River* (1923). It is perhaps not too much to say that when the first *Spoon River* appeared it created a literary sensation. Everybody who read at all read it and talked about it. It became a "best-seller," the first time in our literary history perhaps that a book of poems was listed as a best seller. Spoon River is the fictitious name of a Middle Western town (identified with Lewistown, Illinois), and the Anthology is supposed to be a collection of epitaphs in which the characters themselves, for the most part, speak the real truth about their lives. Thus the author is permitted to reveal the inner secrets of the whole fabric of life in the village about him. Not only are the individuals portrayed in bold outline and crass realism, but the life of the entire village is gradually reproduced and clearly revealed. There are a few connected family groups and related portraits, and there is frequent allusion reaching over from one portrait to another; and when the whole group is before us, we suddenly realize that we have a complete cross-section of society in a typical American village. There is no connected story, no hero, no heroine, no plot, and yet when we finish the book we feel that we have read a complete novel portraying with vivid reality the whole of the village life. There has been some objection to the book because in it Masters seems to paint too dark a picture. He reveals the ugly side of American life in all its coarseness, sensuality, sordidness, greed, and hypocrisy. He seems to over-emphasize the bad and to say too little about the good; but let us remember that he is by nature a satirist, and as an artist he has the right to exaggerate his point in order to make a strong impression. We all know that there is truth in his realistic presentation of the evil, but most of us are disposed to overlook the evil and to emphasize the good. However, not all of the portraits are of bad characters. We have chosen here mainly the pure, the hopeful, the aspiring characters.

Reuben Pantier and **Emily Sparks** (Masters, pp. 786–787)

INTRODUCTORY:

"Reuben Pantier" and "Emily Sparks" are two of a group of five or six related portraits, the two principal ones being the boy's parents, "Benjamin Pantier" and "Mrs. Benjamin Pantier." These were an ill-mated pair, and Reuben, their offspring, is not to be entirely blamed for his wicked life. In "Trainor, the Druggist" we read,

> There were Benjamin Pantier and his wife,
> Good in themselves, but evil toward each other:
> He oxygen, she hydrogen,
> Their son, a devastating fire.

But "Emily Sparks," who is said to be modeled on Masters' own teacher at Petersburg, Illinois, is a good influence on the unfortunate Reuben. She is the old-maid teacher who loved the bad boy with an undying affection. It was her love which saved him at last. There is a moving pathos and a powerful moral force underlying these two notable epitaphs.

Anne Rutledge (Masters, p. 788)

INTRODUCTORY:

Masters came early in life under the domination of that marvelous character Abraham Lincoln. He mentions Lincoln frequently in *Spoon River*. Here we have one of the most beautiful of all the epitaphs, the pathetic portrait of Anne Rutledge, a girl whom Lincoln met and loved at New Salem. She was the daughter of the keeper of the tavern where Lincoln boarded when he lived in New Salem. Her death deeply affected Lincoln. As Masters says, she was the real inspiration of much of the high idealism and wonderful work accomplished by the great leader. Anne Rutledge was buried at Oakland Cemetery near Petersburg. Recently there has been placed over her grave a marble monument with Masters' epitaph engraved upon it.

Jay Hawkins, Howard Lamson, Hosea Chambers, Henry Cogdal, Morgan Oakley, and **Angela Sanger** (Masters, pp. 788–791)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here are six epitaphs from *The New Spoon River* (1923). Many more graves have been made on the hill of Spoon River. There are 246 in the first volume, and 322 in the second, making in all 588 epitaphs. Many changes have come in the village. Spoon River is now a progressive town, "a ganglion for the monster brain Chicago." In spite of the improvements, however, the same old hard, coarse, brutal humanity remains. But Masters' purpose still holds, namely, to improve society by stinging it to action through satire. In "Abram Stein" he seems to affirm his own function as satirist:

> David, sweet singer of Israel,
> Did you not also smite Goliath to death
> With a rock from your terrible sling?
> And if I sang no songs, Spoon River,
> Worthy your remembrance,
> I was your satirist,
> Your voice of outraged beauty,
> Smiting Ignorance and Greed
> And Hatred and Hypocrisy,
> To the day of my death!

Each of the following six epitaphs presents a thought or idea of modern life worthy of our serious consideration. "Jay Hawkins" shows the influence of the stream of crime and wickedness which flows daily through our minds as we read the newspapers. "Howard Lamson" tells us that death ends all trouble and turmoil and that the dead roll on like the objects of nature of which they have become a part. "Hosea Chambers" presents a very plain and practical truth about lying. "Henry Cogdal" presents the idealist, "the private who fell in the war of Wisdom and Beauty and Truth" against the materialism and greed of modern commercialism; the epitaph ends with the noble hope that "there will come a time when crimes against culture will be punished the same as murder!" "Morgan Oakley" tells us that life is made of thorns as well as leaves and that both are essential to full living. "Angela Sanger" strikes a note of hope when the icicles of March fall in a brilliant clatter and the planting season comes again. This is but a new way of saying what Alexander Pope long ago expressed: "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." And so with this note of hope we close our study of Masters, the master satirist of our time.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON MASTERS' POEMS:

(1) What general tone is maintained in the character study of "Slip Shoe Lovey"? (2) What is the symbolic meaning of "The Idiot"? Reproduce as nearly as you can the contrasted portraits of death. (3) Tell the story of "Reuben Pantier" and "Emily Sparks." What emotions are appealed to in the two poems? (4) From what source does the poet quote line three of "Anne Rutledge"? What conception of Lincoln do you get from this poem? What do you think of this poem as an example of Masters' lyric power? (5) Is the satire on the modern newspaper in "Jay Hawkins" justified? Do not most of our papers print some noble, beautiful, aspiring, heroic items each day? Masters once said, "No one knows what is good who knows not what is evil"; would this justify the newspapers in printing stories of crime and debauchery? Would it justify Masters himself in his presentation of the ugly material we find in *Spoon River?* (6) What is the principal thought in the epitaph on "Howard Lamson"? (7) What lesson do you learn from "Hosea Chambers"? (8) Do you think there will come a time, as "Henry Cogdal" prophesies, when crimes against culture will be punished just as murder now is? (9) What do the thorns and leaves spoken of by "Morgan Oakley" signify? (10) What note is struck in the beautiful epitaph on "Angela Sanger"? (11) How do you like the epitaphs as a whole? Do you think they are worth while as poetry?

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON ROBERT FROST

If Edwin Arlington Robinson is the greatest living American poet, Robert Frost is a close second. In fact, not a few of our critics would place Frost first. If not so keenly intellectual, he certainly is nearer to the soil, more human, more approachable, more readily comprehensible. Like Robinson, he is the interpreter of the decaying types of New England. He paints the New England scene with a deft and delicate hand, he reproduces the New England rural types with a powerful realism, and he lights up his sombre pictures with a charming touch of humor. His forebears are all of New England stock. His father was a democrat or "copperhead" before the Civil War, and it is said he thought seriously of moving South and attaching himself to the Confederacy during the war. He moved west after the war and became an editor of a liberal paper in San Francisco. Here in 1875 his son was born and named Robert Lee in honor of the famous southern general. When the boy was ten years old, his father died, and the mother went back to Lawrence, Massachusetts, where the boy's grandfather Frost lived. Here the lad went to school. When he finished his high-school course in 1892, he went to Dartmouth to try college, but he did not like the routine of college work, and remained only a month or two. He was in love with Miss Elinor White of Lawrence, and urged her to marry him, but with a woman's good sense she insisted that she would finish her college course before she married. After her graduation she consented to the marriage, but with the understanding that Robert should return to college. So he went to Harvard for two years, and then returned to Lawrence to engage in various occupations until 1900, in which year his grandfather bought him a farm in Derry, New Hampshire. After five years of more or less unsuccessful farming, he returned to teaching, one of his earlier occupations, taking positions successively in Pinkerton Academy at Derry and in the Normal School at Plymouth, New Hampshire. Finally in 1912 he sold his farm and went to England with his family. Here he gathered up the stray poems that he had been writing ever since he was a high-school senior and published them with a synthetic running comment in the table of contents, making a sort of poetic testament of his experiences so far, and called the neat little volume *A Boy's Will* (1913). The English critics received the book favorably, and Frost was encouraged to bring out another volume. He was now living on a small farm in Buckinghamshire near the homes of the English poets Lascelles Abercrombie and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. This environment seemed to bring out the best that was in him, and he prepared for publication a series of character studies of New England life as he had observed it on his New Hampshire farm, which he published under the title *North of Boston* (1914). Perhaps this is his best volume. It opens with the now famous poem "Mending Wall," and contains many other notable poems. While this is recognized as his best volume, *Mountain Interval* (1916) and *New Hampshire* (1923) contain some very fine poems in the same individual strain. In 1915 he returned to America to find that his fame in England had awakened America to the fact that she had a new poet with an authentic voice. It is to our discredit that we should have waited for England to be the first to recognize this distinctly American poet. Frost had been writing for twenty years, sending his poems steadily to American magazines and almost as steadily receiving them back again. *The Independent* and *Youth's Companion*, be it said to their praise, had accepted and paid small sums for a number of his chaste and simple lyrics, but otherwise he had made no impression as a poet until England recognized his gifts. On his return to America the American public hastened to do him honor. Amherst College called him as a lecturer on literature, particularly poetry, in 1916, requiring him to lecture only three days in the week. He hoped to go on now with his creative work, but he did little writing during the three or four years he remained at Amherst, for, as he jocularly said, it took him about two days to wind up for his lectures and about two days to unwind, and so he had no energy left for writing poetry. In 1921 the University of Michigan granted Frost an art fellowship or a kind of resident professorship with no set schedule for teaching. He lectured or talked or read poetry with groups of interested students as occasion demanded, and occasionally he made lecture and reading tours over the country, but somehow even with this light work he failed to do much creative writing. Frost is a delightfully informal reader, and he always makes friends when he reads. He should have time and leisure, however, for his creative work. Recently he has returned to his former position as lecturer on poetry at Amherst.

The Pasture (Frost, p. 792)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem, printed as a prelude to *North of Boston*, is a charming invitation to the scene of most of the poems which follow, in fact to most of Frost's poetry in all his volumes. The simple incident of the farmer's going to the pasture is made memorable by the chaste and delicate artistry of the poet. Frost is the farmer who goes out into the pasture, and he invites us to go along with him. There are two things to be done, clean the spring and bring in a new-born calf. Who could resist the invitation: "I sha'n't be gone long. — You come too"?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What two incidents are vividly presented in the two stanzas? (2) What is the tone of the poem? Do the words sound as if they might be actual talk? (3) Which lines rime? Why is the fourth line repeated? (4) Memorize these two charming stanzas.

Mowing (Frost, p. 792)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem appeared in *A Boy's Will* (1913) as an early suggestion of his later poems dealing with rural life or incidents on the farm. There is in the poem just one dominant sound, namely, that of the whispering scythe; and just one dominant thought, namely, that to the rural laborer the facts of life need no intervention of romance — the fay, the elf, the dream — to make them beautiful. One line in the poem has become particularly famous, "The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows." The poem has just fourteen lines, and yet it does not seem to be a sonnet. Its rime scheme, *abcabdecdfegfg*, is certainly not like that of any of the familiar sonnet models, and the poem does not naturally divide into the logical parts of the ordinary sonnet. Its rhythm, too, is that of ordinary speech, with many extra syllables and dislocated accents; and yet the whole presents a remarkably effective picture and is entirely satisfying to the ear. One might call "Mowing" a perfect example of pure poetry made out of one of the ordinary tasks of farm life.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Who is speaking in this poem? (2) What repeated word suggests the sound of the scythe? (3) Can anyone tell what secret the scythe whispered to the ground? (4) What did it surely not whisper (lines 7, 8)? Why would such things as dreams of idle hours and fairy gold be out of place? (5) What line seems to sum up the thought of the whole poem? Memorize this line.

Mending Wall (Frost, p. 793)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is perhaps Frost's best known poem. It presents a vivid picture, portrays two characters perfectly, and gives artistic reality to an experience familiar to residents in New England farms where rock walls or fences are common. One critic suggests that there is a natural symbolism in the poem, two characters — a nationalist and an internationalist — being contrasted; but one can imagine that Frost would smile at such an interpretation. What the poet is doing here is merely reproducing himself and his neighbor engaged in a common farm experience, that of mending the wall between them. The character of the neighbor is brought out admirably in his single remark. The poet undertakes to argue in a half-humorous, half-mischievous way with his odd neighbor, but nothing could change one who has been brought up on the proverb, "Good fences make good neighbors." Read the poem as if you were merely talking to yourself out loud. When you finish, ask yourself if you understand the two characters and can see them clearly at their job of mending the wall.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does the first line suggest the need for mending the wall? Where is this line repeated? (2) What are some of the things mentioned that cause the gaps in the wall? (3) How and when is the repairing done? (4) Why does the poet say the work is just another out-door game? Do the neighbors really need a wall between their farms? (5) What proverb makes up all that the neighbor has to say? Do you get a good idea of the character from his one remark? Tell what kind of man you think he was. (6) What vivid picture is presented in lines 33–40? (7) What kinds of darkness does the neighbor seem to move in? (8) In what meter is the poem written? Has it any rime? Scan ten or twelve lines and note the easy movement and the talk-like quality of the rhythm.

The Code (Frost, p. 794)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is one of the two distinctly humorous long poems in *North of Boston* (1914), "A Hundred Collars" being the other. As usual in Frost's humorous poems, there is more interest in the characters and their peculiarly dry and crackling talk than in the joke itself. That the poet has a decided sense of humor in his portrayal of the rural New England type every reader of his will at once agree, but he always subordinates his humor to the interpretation of character and personality. Untermeyer speaks of this poem as "nothing more (or less) than a richly elaborated joke."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) With what picture does the poem open? What is meant by "the perpetual dagger flickering across its bosom"? (2) What three characters are first introduced? Who is the "town-bred farmer"? (3) Do you get a clear idea of the characters of the two hired men from the first bit of conversation? Describe them. (4) What advice does the hired man give the town-bred farmer? (5) How does he illustrate the point? Relate the incident. (6) Is there much dialect used by the hired man in telling his story? How, then, does the poet give you the impression of the countryman's talk? (7) Collect four or five of the hired man's homely, striking phrases, such as "a humped body nigh as big as a biscuit." (8) Was the hired man in a joking humor? Does his mood increase the humorous effect? (9) Do you get a clear conception of farmer Sanders from the story?

The Grindstone (Frost, p. 798)

INTRODUCTORY:

Any boy who has ever had to turn an old-fashioned grindstone for someone else to sharpen an axe or a scythe on, will appreciate this monologue. And nearly every country boy has had such an experience. The editor of this book remembers that once his father decided to grind an axe, and called on the twelve-year-old son to turn the wheel. The editor recalls very vividly how hard the old stone was to turn, and how long it took to sharpen that dull axe, and how often his father would test the edge with his thumb, only to decide that the blade needed more grinding. Every sensation and thought that the poet here presents seems almost an exact reproduction of what that boy experienced. This poem is taken from Frost's *New Hampshire* (1923).

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What satisfaction does the poet take in the fact that with all its motion the old grindstone has never got anywhere? (2) At what season does he view the grindstone as it stands under the old apple tree? (3) Why is the man who ground the blade described as "A Father-Time-like man"? (4) When the man "turned on will-power," what effect was produced on the speed of the stone? (5) Do you suppose the boy thought the grindstone had been improved any at all since its invention in the long ago? (6) How does he show that he thought the machine must still be very primitive? (7) What idea do you get from "an oblate spheroid that kicked and struggled in the gate"? (*Gate* is used here for the wooden frame in which the stone turned.) (8) How did the boy feel toward the man who was holding the wheel back? (9) What thoughts did the boy have about overdoing the job? What are his last words?

Nothing Gold Can Stay (Frost, p. 800)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here is one of those terse but perfect lyrics which Frost sometimes flashes on his readers as a soldier might swing out a glittering blade to dazzle the eye of a dozing citizen. There is here merely the flash of a single novel thought illustrated in three details, but the mind once awakened to the idea goes on making its own application in numerous other details. The first bud of a leaf shows in gold, but soon the leaf is only a leaf, a thing of green. So with all of a man's ideals. Eden changes from joy to grief; the dawn goes down, that is, changes from gold to the plain white light of day. Here in eight short lines we have a universal fact or thought suggested. Frost works hard to bring even his slightest poems to perfection. Fortunately we can quote an early form in which this lyric suggested itself to the poet. Read it carefully and decide whether you think the final form, as given in the text from *New Hampshire* (1923), is an improvement. Here it is:

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold;
Her early leaves are flowers—
But only so for hours;
Then leaves subside to leaves.
In autumn she achieves
A still more golden blaze.
But nothing golden stays.

Birches (Frost, p. 800)

INTRODUCTORY:

Usually Frost writes objectively about the people and things he observes, but in "Birches," a poem in his third volume, *Mountain Interval* (1916), he introduces the personal pronoun I and tells us of a joyous boyhood experience. Here again we find that the common experiences of life are worthy subjects for art. Every country boy has had glorious fun swinging birches or other trees—riding them, some of us called it—but no one had ever thought of this exhilarating experience as a fit subject for poetry until Robert Frost wrote "Birches." This is both a nature and a human-nature poem. Above all things in nature Frost seems to love trees best. He has given us many new and beautiful images of trees and the outdoor world of New England. Read this poem thoughtfully and sympathetically. It is one of Frost's most beautiful productions.

EXPLANATORY:

801 : 14. *bracken.* A large fern. The idea in this line is that the trees are bent down to the ground where the withered ferns lie.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What does a bent birch in the forest always suggest to the poet? (2) Read the remarkable description of how the ice affects the birches in winter, lines 5–20, and comment on the accuracy and novelty of the ideas. (3) How does the country boy amuse himself with his father's birches? (4) Do you get, from the description of how the boy does it, the actual sensation of swinging a birch? (5) At what point does the poet begin to reflect on the deeper meaning of the experience of swinging birches? (7) Just what is implied in the last line, "One could do worse than be a swinger of birches"?

Introductory Note on Carl Sandburg

Robinson and Frost have few or no detractors and many admirers. Masters and Sandburg and Lindsay and Amy Lowell have many admirers and quite a number of detractors. The principal reason of this is that the first two poets have stuck to the conventional verse forms and made new music on the well-known instruments, while the last four have invented new instruments, that is, written in new rhythms and verse forms, and there have been many who are not willing to accept these new forms. But time may prove that the more daring poets are after all the more enduring. When the new generation of readers becomes accustomed to the new forms, these more radical poets may come into their own; who knows? Of these more radical poets Carl Sandburg (1878—) is perhaps the most consistently himself; that is, he has set down his own individual thoughts and created his own cadences and stuck to his own personal idiom throughout. He never writes in rime, never in conventional or artificial verse forms such as other poets use—the quatrain, the sonnet, the rondeau, the ballade, and the like. He has created his own rhythms and constructed his own verse patterns. He writes in a sort of free verse which may be described as derived from Whitman's irregularly cadenced verse on the one hand and the modern free verse of the Imagists on the other. Whatever he may be, Sandburg is always himself, never an imitator, never a mere echo of other poets. He was born at Galesburg, Illinois, the son of illiterate Swedish parents. His father's name was August Johnson, a railroad blacksmith who had settled in the Middle West. There were so many August Johnsons here, it is said, that our August Johnson lost his wages for one pay roll and then changed his name to Sandburg to prevent a recurrence of such a distressing accident. Carl went to school till he was thirteen, and then began to earn his own living as a driver of a milk wagon. He next became a porter in a barber shop, and from that he went on to other jobs of various kinds. He finally went to Colorado and worked as a dishwasher in a hotel, and from there drifted to Kansas to work on the farms as a harvester. Then the Spanish-American war came, and he enlisted and went to Cuba in 1898. After the war he came back to Galesburg with a hundred dollars in his pocket and an ambition in his soul to go to college. He entered Lombard College and worked his way there for several years, doing the work of janitor, watchman, and odd-job man to support himself. Here he fell under the influence of an inspiring teacher of English, Professor Philip Wright, and joined a Poor Writers' Club. He published a miscellaneous volume of his early prose and poetry under the title of *In Reckless Ecstasy* (1904). Then he went out into the world to look for work. For a while he was the manager of the advertising department of a large store, and then he sold pictures and stereopticon views in various parts of the country. Then he took a position as organizer and lecturer for the Social-Democratic party of Wisconsin. Finally he went into the newspaper game, and here he began to find the true outlet for his gifts. He had been writing some poetry and much prose all along, but now he began to develop seriously his gift for writing poetry in his own cadences. Although he had been long a poet at heart, he was late coming into his own peculiar poetic kingdom. He was a son of the prairies. In that excellent long poem called "Prairie," in *Cornhuskers*, he says, "I was born on the prairie, and the milk of its wheat, the red of its clover, the eyes of its women, gave me a song and a slogan." He is a man of the people, a real democrat, and he has had the good sense to make poetry of his own experiences rather than to imitate the poetry of books. There are, as Untermeyer says, two Sandburgs—the coarse, hard, native Sandburg, defender of the working masses, spokesman for the common people; and the gentle, dreamy, poetic Sandburg, painter of delicate scenes and creator of lovely overtones. There is much of the social reformer in him, much of the advocate of better conditions for the factory workers, the ordinary laborers, the bricklayers, the carpenters, and the common street types. But there is also in him the artist, the lover of beauty in the mists and winds and clouds and prairies and wild, free, outdoor life; and there is in him, too, much of the worshiper of great men like Washington and Lincoln. For school-room purposes we cannot choose much of the first type of his work, the coarser slang and the harder language of the street; and hence we have chosen here to represent him chiefly in his more delicate, his gentler mood. "Chicago" is a poem of the first class, though it is by no means a violent example of the harder, more brutal type of his poems, for it is about half way between his more vigorous portraits of the street types and his more delicate nature pictures. The rest of our selections belong distinctly to the purer lyric type of the second class. *Chicago and Other Poems* (1916) was his first important volume. Then came *Cornhuskers* (1918), *Smoke and Steel* (1920), *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1922), and *Selected Poems* (1926). Sandburg was now established as one of the major figures in American poetry. He had married in 1908 and now had a family of three daughters. Since 1918 he has been permanently attached to the Chicago *Daily News* as motion-picture critic, a position which gives him a moderate income and sufficient time to devote to creative writing. He was telling stories to his children now, and out of this new life-experience came a wonderful new prose book of modern fairy tales, *Rootabaga Stories* (1922), a volume which became one of the best sellers in its class. And this was soon followed by *Rootabaga Pigeons* (1923) in the same vein. Now we have his new book on *Abraham Lincoln* (1926), one of the notable biographies of our time. We may yet expect much good work from Sandburg, for he is young and vigorous and indefatigable, and whatever he turns his hand to, we may be sure, will be done with verve and originality.

Chicago (Sandburg, p. 803)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem made Carl Sandburg famous. It appeared in *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse* in 1914 and was awarded the $200 prize as the best American poem appearing in the magazine for the year. Its lines will at once remind the student of Walt Whitman's cadenced verse, and yet there is something new and fresh here also. There are strength, energy, power, vigorous personality, and marvelous imaginative vision in the conception of the big, howling, husky western city. Many readers were at first repelled by the hard, bludgeoning words of this poem, but everyone must recognize that the words chosen are just such as are needed to bring before us the real spirit of Chicago. For example, this city is a great manufacturing and railroad center, and the greatest wheat and meat-packing center of the world. What words could better bring out these facts than "Hog Butcher," "Tool Maker," "Stacker of Wheat," "Player with Railroads"? The spirit of the city is conceived in the form of a young giant, wicked but strong and vigorous, laughing and bragging, but doing the heavy work of the modern industrial world. Study closely the imaginative figure of the young giant as presented in the poem.

Sketch (Sandburg, p. 804)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here we have one of those delicate impressionistic sketches of the shore line for which Sandburg has become notable. The ships are mere shadows rocking on the slowly rising tide, the sand bar reaches out into the water like an arm, the wavelets write wrinkles on the sand. But the principal item of beauty, mentioned in the first lines and repeated in the last, is the shadow of the ships rocking in the low blue lustre. As you read, try to visualize accurately the beautiful picture.

Lost (Sandburg, p. 805)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is an impressionistic vision of a boat lost in a fog on the lake. The poet personifies the ship as a baby reaching out desperately for its mother's breast and eyes. The figure is a little strained, but very effective. Sandburg has lost some of his enthusiasm for this poem, perhaps because it is a little too much like the clever conceptions of the Imagists.

Fog (Sandburg, p. 805)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is one of the most famous of Sandburg's shorter imagistic poems. He conceives the fog as a big gray cat that creeps silently up on the city, sits on its haunches and watches quietly, and then silently moves on. Note how thoroughly the impression is unified around the single image of the cat.

Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard (Sandburg, p. 805)

INTRODUCTORY:

Everyone has seen some old lonely and deserted brickyard, or lime kiln, or other neglected place of former enterprise, but few have been able to see the beauty of such a spot. It is night, and the moon paints marvelous pictures on the yellow clay background of the old yard with its pond of shimmering water where once men were busy molding bricks. Read the poem as an artist's picture of a "wide dreaming pansy" under the moon. Note the suggestive picture phrases, such as "lapping sand," "curving willows," "fluxions of yellow."

Grass (Sandburg, p. 806)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is one of Sandburg's notable shorter war poems. It is a protest against the futility of war. After the terrible battles are over, the grass comes and covers all. Nature goes on with her work of beautifying the very spots where men have done their best to tear up the earth and destroy each other. Sandburg had been through one war, and he was disillusioned and could speak from hard experience. His war poems, then, become a significant contribution to our recent poetry. Other war poems of his that you should read are "Killers," "Among the Red Guns," "Jaws," "Wars," "A Million Young Workmen in 1915," "Out of White Lips," "The Four Brothers." Most of these poems show a feeling of resentment at the grim fact that war robs the world of its vigorous young life; but the last one named presents England, France, Russia, and America as four brothers who have joined forces to do a big job, namely, to cleanse the world of kings and bring in the age of true democracy. After the armistice and the peace conference Sandburg continued to record his anti-war impressions. The poem of his in this kind that caused most discussion was "And So Today." This was written on the occasion of the elaborate funeral of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery, Washington, D. C. Here the poet castigates with his fiercest irony "the proclamations of the honorable orators" as they button their "Prinz Alberts" and pronounce "the salt-soaked syllables *sac-ri-fice*." They roll the syllables under their tongues, but they know nothing about the real horrors of actual suffering in war. They have nothing to offer the dead boy but empty oratorical promises.

And so today — they lay him away —
  the boy nobody knows the name of —
  they lay him away in granite and steel —
  with music and roses — under a flag —
  under a sky of promises.

Cool Tombs (Sandburg, p. 806)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here is a poem in one of Sandburg's novel rhythms. You have probably never read a poem like it, though the pattern of the long, richly cadenced lines will remind you somewhat of many of Whitman's lines. This is a reflective lyric, a poem dealing with death and the cessation of all of life's troubles and turmoil. Three historic examples are given, Lincoln, Grant, and Pocahontas, and the last of these suggests the final application. After all, the lovers get the best out of life and perhaps out of death, for they are not losers even "in the dust—in the cool tombs." The images for each illustration are aptly chosen. The "copperheads and the assassin" troubled Lincoln most, the "con men" or gamblers and speculations in Wall Street robbed General Grant of peace; but Pocahontas, "lovely as a poplar, sweet as a red haw in November or a pawpaw in May" reminds us only of love. So with any street full of people in modern times; the lovers get most out of life and perhaps remember happy things even in death. The conclusion reminds one of Browning's conclusion in "Love Among the Ruins,"

> Shut them in,
> With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
> Love is best.

Prayers of Steel (Sandburg, p. 807)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here is a poem symbolizing the devotion of the workman to modern industrial advancement. The age of steel must have its devotees just as the age of chivalry had its heroes. The steel worker in the skyscraper gives his life for the advance of modern civilization. He lays himself on the anvil and prays to become a steel spike to hold the huge girder in place. Every nail has its task—to hold the tall building steady as it pierces the blue night and reaches up toward the white stars. Read the poem in a hard, metallic tone. Remember that it is steel that is speaking; but you may make the application to the faithful, modern workman at his task.

Winds of the Windy City (Sandburg, p. 807)

INTRODUCTORY:

Chicago is called the Windy City, and Sandburg is called the poet laureate of Chicago. In this poem, which ~~is the tenth and last~~ section in a long poem called "The Windy City," he celebrates the nickname of his city. *Medicine Hat* (line 11) is a district in Alberta, Canada, north of Chicago and Lake Michigan. The winds, invoked from all directions and in all seasons, are admirably characterized in this charming lyric; we are made to feel that Chicago is the home to which all winds naturally go.

Washington Monument by Night (Sandburg, p. 808)

INTRODUCTORY:

Here we have a beautiful picture of Washington Monument by night, and a profound meditation on the character of Washington. Imagine yourself looking at the monument in the moonlight and thinking with the poet about the strong-willed or iron man who fought eight years to win American independence. The whole career of Washington passes before our vision—the blood on the snow at Valley Forge at Christmas, the babbling tongues who criticized the great leader, the loneliness of the great man, his indomitable courage in the face of adverse circumstances, "fighting . . . fighting . . . eight years." The ninth stanza is made up of silences. The reader is expected to pause at the dots and let his mind go on thinking about the influence of an iron man down through the ages.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES ON SANDBURG'S POEMS:

(1) Give reasons why "Chicago" is one of the most famous poems of recent American literature. (2) How does the poet conceive the spirit of the city? (3) Does he deny that the city is wicked, crooked, brutal? What is his answer or excuse for these valid charges against Chicago? (4) Compare the opening lines with the closing lines. What effect does the repetition have? (5) List the beautiful images recorded in "Sketch." What kind of a poem would you call this? (6) What image is invoked in the poem "Lost"? Do you get a vivid impression of the object described? (7) What image is the basis of "Fog"? Memorize this short poem as an example of Sandburg's concentrated imaginative imagery. (8) What is it that makes "Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard" notable? Why is it called *nocturne?* (9) Comment on the great battles listed in "Grass." What is the underlying idea in this poem? Name some of Sandburg's other war poems. (10) What is the principal thought in the poem "Cool Tombs"? What is the peculiar form of this poem? (11) What is the theme of "Prayers of Steel"? What is the tone of this poem? (12) What thought is voiced in the opening movement of "Winds of the Windy City"? Is it true that the works of man are far less permanent than the features of nature? (13) What winds are invoked in this poem? Where do the winds of fall, summer, spring, winter come from? (14) Describe Washington Monument as presented by the poet. What thoughts come into your mind as you contemplate the monument? Why does the poem end with silences? (15) Which one of all these short poems by Sandburg do you like best? Give reasons for your choice.

Introductory Note on Vachel Lindsay

(Nicholas) Vachel Lindsay (1879—) is a modern wandering minstrel, a sort of reincarnated Anglo-Saxon scop or gleeman. He has traveled over a large part of the United States reciting or chanting his poems and inducing his audiences to join in on the refrains, thus entertaining and amusing his crowds immensely. He speaks of this phase of his work as "the higher vaudeville." His reputation grew rapidly from the publication of his two prize poems, "General William Booth Enters Heaven" (1913) and "The Congo" (1914) in *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse*, and their inclusion, shortly after their magazine publication, in two volumes named after the prize poems and filled out with other productions by their author. These two books placed Mr. Lindsay among the most prominent poets of the day. The title poems were something entirely new in our poetry. The General Booth poem introduced a familiar hymn used by the Salvation Army ("The Blood of the Lamb") as a sort of recurring refrain to set the tune to which the verses should be sung, and a big bass drum, a flute, banjos, tambourines, and other instruments as an accompaniment to the great Commander's entrance into his reward. "The Congo," a study of the negro race, is decorated with imitations of the negro's peculiar antics and popular incantations, such as "Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom" and "Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you," and a remarkably beautiful image of the Congo river recurring at intervals throughout the poem to suggest the African origin of the negro:

> *Then I saw the Congo, creeping through the black,*
> *Cutting through the forest with a golden track.*

When Lindsay recites these poems he literally raises one's hair and makes one's skin creep. He has a strong, melodious baritone voice, and he chants his poems with great emotional sincerity and effectiveness. Sometimes he throws his head far back and clasps his hands in emotional gestures, and sometimes he paces rhythmically to and fro across the stage, and always he bows magnificently and repeatedly, bending his massive head almost to his knees when he concludes a recitation or responds to an encore. He prints his chants, or rimed orations as he calls them, with suggestive notations or glosses on the margins of his pages, thus indicating to his readers just how each part of the poem should be read. All these devices attract great attention at first, but when the novelty wears off there is naturally a reaction. Some critics think that such devices are unworthy of really great poetry, and hence they have been led to ignore Lindsay as a poet. The author himself says, "I have paid too great a penalty for writing a few rimed orations." But he should not be judged too severely for his peculiarities. Everyone must admit that this wandering minstrel has done a great work in arousing interest in oral poetry and in bringing the masses of the people to an appreciation of spoken or chanted verse. There is much more to this poet than the mere platform reciter. He is a lover of art, a worshiper of heroic souls, and a fair-minded estimator of racial and individual characteristics. He has a strong, emphatic sense of rhythm, a distinct vein of originality, and a genuine imaginative power. He should be judged by his serious and regular poems, like "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight" for example, as well as by his more radical chants, grotesques, poem-games, and the like. He was born in Springfield, Illinois, in 1879, the offspring of a slave-owning Kentucky family. The Mason and Dixon line runs straight through the middle of his ancestral home at Springfield, he declares. He was brought up in the Campbellite faith, and he has fortunately never outgrown the religious influences of his youth. He has himself become, in fact, a sort of evangelist or preacher of the gospel of beauty. His mother destined him to become an artist, and he acquiesced in this decision. After spending three years in Hiram College in Ohio, he studied painting and design in the Art Institute of Chicago and in the New York School of Art. For a time he lectured on art in and around New York, and then he accepted a position as traveling lecturer for the Y. M. C. A. and the Anti-Saloon League. Later he decided that he would go among the people as a sort of tramp evangelist of beauty and righteousness. He printed a number of his poems on sheets and called them "Rhymes to be Traded for Bread." With these and certain drawings of his he went about the country reciting his verses and showing his pictures wherever he could gather a company to listen or look. He set down certain rules for these tramping trips, and later he worked them into a book called *A Handy Guide for Beggars.* He made his way easily, finding eager audiences wherever he went. In this way he traveled over much of the South, Middle West, and New England. Then he went back to Springfield, spending most of the year in study and writing and drawing, but frequently going out on reading or lecture tours to various colleges throughout the country. Finally he made a tour of England, successfully reciting his poems in London and other cities. He has published a number of prose books, some of them decorated with his drawings and most of them interlarded with his shorter poems; among these are *A Handy Guide for Beggars*, *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty*, *The Art of the Moving Picture*, and *The Golden Book of Springfield.* Besides his first two volumes of verse mentioned above, he has published *The Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems* (1917), *The Golden Whales of California* (1920), and *Collected Poems* (1923, revised 1925). For the last-named volume the poet wrote a long introduction, telling much about himself and his adventures while singing his songs. Recently he has published three volumes of verse decorated with his own drawings, *Going to the Sun* (1923), *Going to the Stars* (1926), and *The Candle in the Cabin* (1926). In 1925 he was married to Miss Elizabeth Conner, and at present he is living in Spokane, Washington, quite happy in his new rôle of husband and father.

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight (Lindsay, p. 810)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem was written in 1914 when the whole world was shocked at the terrible carnage of the opening battles of the World War. Lindsay, living as he did at this time in the city where Abraham Lincoln practised law and is buried, conceived the spirit of the great president as resting uneasy and rising from the grave to walk around the city at midnight and remind the people that all he had worked for was in vain if the children of men should go on warring upon and slaying each other as they were doing in the great European war. This is one of the most notable war poems produced in America, and at the same time it gives a very powerful poetic and imaginative portrayal of the character of Lincoln.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What peculiar phenomenon is recorded in the first two stanzas? (2) How is the strange figure described in the third stanza? (3) What is the occasion that brings the spirit from the grave? (4) What is the only thing that will bring peace and rest to the disturbed spirit? (5) Compare this poem with "The Master" by Edwin Arlington Robinson, p. 777. Which of the two poems do you like better?

The Santa Fé Trail (Lindsay, p. 811)

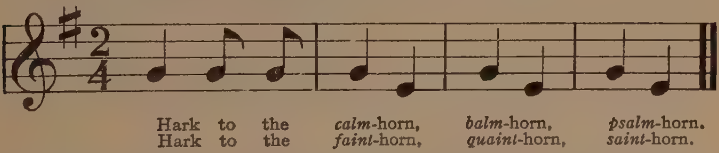
INTRODUCTORY:

"The Congo" is the best known and most ambitious of Lindsay's longer chants, but "The Santa Fé Trail" is quite as interesting as an example of this peculiar type of his work. As he tramped across

Kansas he was profoundly impressed by the spectacle of his fellow Americans pouring in a continuous stream of automobiles over the great public highways. He was not disgusted with the noise and bustle of it all, but he noted that nature was not to be entirely drowned out by the honking of the innumerable horns and the roar and rattle of the various kinds of vehicles on the highway. If the automobiles represent the restless, hurrying, surging speed of modern industrialism, the song of the Rachel Jane represents the voice of elemental nature, which after all is fundamental and not to be silenced or forgotten. The poet gives first a picture of the racing automobile from the east, and then the vast concourse of automobiles and freight trains speeding westward. He stops to describe himself as a tramp who will not kill a grasshopper "even though he eats a hole in my shirt like a door." He tells how he earns his way by reciting and showing pictures. He feasts on the beauties of the roadside as he goes, but he would not walk always alone. He really delights in the noise of the horns and the flapping, snapping pennants giving the names of the cities from which the automobiles come. The song of the Rachel Jane breaks in as a sweet interlude. And as the cars and freight trains disappear in the distance, speeding toward their far goals in the West, he sits down and hears again the fine, sweet voices of nature, ending with the lovely, delicate birdnotes of the Rachel Jane. The poem as a whole shows a wide range of emotional power, a remarkable virtuosity in tunes and echo sounds, and a blending of spiritual idealism and industrial energy which lifts it above the merely technically clever and into the realm of real poetic art.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Why is the poem called a humoresque? (2) By what device does the author manage to tell us what the Rachel Jane is? (3) Into what two main divisions is the poem divided? (4) What musical effects are produced in the opening lines? (Note particularly the near-rimes of the first three lines and the triple riming words of the fourth, fifth, and sixth lines. Find similar devices throughout the poem.) (5) How do the time and the volume and quality of the sound change as the poem progresses? Try to read each part just as the poet suggests. Make up a sort of tune for the triple rimed lines. For example, read lines four and five as follows:


Hark to the *calm*-horn, *balm*-horn, *psalm*-horn.
Hark to the *faint*-horn, *quaint*-horn, *saint*-horn.

(6) Why does the poet not kill the grass-hopper? (7) How does the beggar-poet earn his way? (8) Is he distressed at the noises of the road? (9) When is the song of the Rachel Jane first introduced? At what points is the song of the bird repeated? (10) What other noisy means of transportation are introduced at line 97? Why are capitals used in this and the following lines? (Notice that capitals are used again at line 121 when the mufflers on the cars are opened. Why?)

(11) After all the cars have gone westward, where does the poet find himself and of what does he think (lines 133–143)? (12) What is the last sound he hears? Is it artistic to end the loud noises of the day along the highway with this delicate music of nature? What two ideals are thus contrasted in the poem?

The Leaden-Eyed (Lindsay, p. 817)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem makes an appeal for a fuller expression of individuality in the lives of the common masses. It is the great crime of modern democratic society that each life is not given an opportunity for full development. The poet is not so much concerned about the poverty, or the suffering, or the hard work, or even the death of the poor; but he is deeply concerned about their lack of ideals, and he passionately regrets that the poor are not provided with opportunities to develop higher ideals of life and service.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Can you suggest some ways in which young souls are smothered out in America? (2) What adjectives are used to describe the condition of the poor who grow up without ideals (line 4)? (3) Against what lacks in the lives of the poor does the poet vigorously protest?

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE IMAGISTS

The Imagist Group of poets began to take definite form in 1912. In 1913 Ezra Pound, then in London, induced some of the younger experimenters to contribute to a volume which appeared in 1914 under the title of *Des Imagistes.* There were eleven English and American poets represented, but not all of them can by any extension of the term be classed as imagists. Besides Ezra Pound, the principal American poets in the list were Amy Lowell, H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), and William Carlos Williams. Richard Aldington and F. S. Flint were among the most promising of the English representatives. W. C. Williams quietly withdrew and developed his own peculiar poetry, and Ezra Pound quickly moved on into other more radical forms of writing and left the group to fall under the leadership of Amy Lowell. Miss Lowell prepared to continue the experiment of publishing an annual anthology of the new imagistic poetry, and in 1915 the first volume of *Some Imagist Poets* appeared. John Gould Fletcher and D. H. Lawrence joined the group, so that there were three Americans, Amy Lowell, H. D., and John Gould Fletcher, and three Englishmen, Richard Aldington, F. S. Flint, and D. H. Lawrence. This volume aroused a great deal of discussion in literary circles, and it was followed by two more volumes under the same title, dated 1916 and 1917 respectively. In the preface to the 1915 volume the Imagists laid down their principles in six items as follows:

> 1. To use the language of common speech, but to employ always the *exact* word, not the nearly-exact, nor the merely decorative.
> 2. To create new rhythms—as the expression of new moods—not to copy old rhythms which merely echo old moods. We do not insist on "free verse" as the only method of writing poetry. We fight for it as a principle of liberty. We believe that the individuality of a poet may often be better expressed in free verse than in conventional verse forms. In poetry, a new cadence means a new idea.

3. To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject. It is not good art to write badly about aeroplanes and automobiles; nor is it necessarily bad art to write well about the past. We believe passionately in the artistic values of modern life, but we wish to point out that there is nothing so uninspiring as an aeroplane of the year 1911.

4. To present an image (hence the name: "Imagist"). We are not a school of painters, but we believe that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous. It is for this reason that we oppose the cosmic poet, who seems to us to shirk the real difficulties of his art.

5. To produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred or indefinite.

6. Finally, most of us believe that concentration is the very essence of poetry.

There is nothing particularly new or revolutionary in these principles, but the statement of them caused quite a furore among the poets and critics of the time. The main aims of the imagists were to bring poetry back to the ordinary speech of everyday life; to avoid all archaic words like *whilom*, *e'en*, *thine*, *dost*, *hath;* to avoid all trite or worn poetical phrases and figures of speech (*clichés*, they called them); to make poetry deal with concrete realities rather than generalities; and to make hard, clear images in every line. Their name, Imagists, implies that they wished to be distinguished as poets who evoked clear images and sharp outlines, so that the reader could visualize accurately every object and re-create definitely every emotion presented. They opposed all slushy sentimentality, all highly decorative and rhetorically sonorous, "high-sounding," elevated verse. They declared that they were not a school of painters, but after all their poems often produce the vividly concrete effects of paintings. Sometimes in their effort toward concentration they reduce the images to the barest outlines, but still the picture, the image, is there. For example Ezra Pound struck off a striking image in a poem of two lines descriptive of the crowds in a metropolitan station:

> The apparition of these faces in a crowd:
> Petals on a wet, black bough.

And Amy Lowell later gave a striking image in her two-line poem called "Peace":

> Perched upon the muzzle of a cannon
> A yellow butterfly is slowly opening and shutting its wings.

These images do succeed in making a picture and in flashing an idea through our minds. The ideas are poetic and the images distinct and beautiful, but we could hardly call these full-blown poems.

Reserving Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams for the later group of "Experimenters," we shall here present examples of the best imagistic poetry of Amy Lowell, John Gould Fletcher, and H. D.

Patterns (Amy Lowell, p. 818)

INTRODUCTORY:

Amy Lowell (1874–1925) is unquestionably one of the major figures in American literature of the first quarter of the twentieth century. Whether one accepts her as a poetic genius or merely regards her as "a Roosevelt among the Parnassians," one must admit that she has made an enduring place for herself in the literature of her time. She gathered the clans and led the van of the younger poets, she fought the battles of the new free-verse and imagistic poetry, she attracted upon herself the fiercest attacks of the conservatives and academicians, and she always gave a satisfactory account of herself. During her lifetime she was hailed as the greatest living woman poet and one of the greatest women poets of all time, and since her death she has been lauded by our foremost critics, conservatists and modernists joining their voices in a uniform paean of praise for her energy, versatility, power, and profound artistic insight. On the other hand, while she was yet in the heat of the struggle she was attacked as a mere experimenter, a versifier without genius, a bass-drum propagandist for strange new poetic nostrums. Whether the real truth lies on one side or the other or in the golden mean between the two, time alone can determine; but no matter what the final verdict may be, Amy Lowell can never be ignored in any account of American literature of the early twentieth century. She belongs to the famous Lowell family of New England, being a sister of President A. L. Lowell of Harvard University and a distant cousin of the poet James Russell Lowell. She was educated privately, largely by her mother. She traveled extensively and read widely. In 1902 she decided to make a poet of herself, but her aim was so high and her preparation so complete that it was not until 1910, when she was thirty-six, that her first poem appeared in print, and she was thirty-eight when she ventured to publish her first book, *A Dome of Many-Colored Glass* (1912). Most of the poems in this book were in the regular conventional rimed forms, but in her next book, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914), there were both conventional verse forms and free-verse and imagistic poems. In the meantime she had attached herself to the Imagist movement and published one poem in Ezra Pound's anthology *Des Imagistes.* In 1915 she became a champion of the Imagist cause and joined five other poets in putting out an annual anthology called *Some Imagist Poets* in 1915, 1916, and 1917. In 1915 she began lecturing on poetry and writing criticism. Her first critical volume was *Six French Poets* (1915), a searching analysis of the advanced French poets. Her next volume of poetry, probably her best, *Men, Women and Ghosts*, appeared in 1916. It contains imagistic poems, polyphonic prose, and some rimed poems, mostly narrative and descriptive—"a book of stories," she called it. Then came the first and one of the most important critical books on the new poetry, *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* (1917), a discussion in four long chapters of the work of Robinson, Frost, Masters and Sandburg, and The Imagists, H. D. and John Gould Fletcher. She said nothing about herself, but the work was in reality a defense of all that she stood for in modern poetry. Her other volumes are *Can Grande's Castle* (1918), a book of four long poems composed entirely in polyphonic prose; *Pictures of the Floating World* (1919); *Legends* (1921); *What's O'Clock* (1925); and *East Wind* (1926). In 1925 also appeared her last critical work, *John Keats*, a two-volume biography of her favorite English poet. She labored so steadily and intensely on this last book that she probably hastened her death, which occurred suddenly on May 12, 1925. In addition to all this, Miss Lowell contributed many controversial articles, reviews, and essays to periodicals, and in 1922 she published anonymously *A Critical Fable*, a *jeu d'esprit* in four-stressed anapestic rimes, after the manner of her kinsman James Russell Lowell's *A Fable for Critics.*

Her authorship of the volume was at once detected and presently acknowledged. The poem contains critical estimates of twenty-one modern poets, including herself. The following brief excerpt from her portrait of herself will illustrate the style of this amusing *jeu d'esprit.*

> They've accused her of every description of quackery,
> Of only concerning herself with knick-knackery,
> It has all been enough to set one's back awry.

"Patterns" appeared first in the second volume of *Some Imagist Poets* (1916), and shortly afterwards as the initial poem in *Men, Women and Ghosts* (1916). It immediately attracted attention as a remarkably original poem. It presents a picture, portrays a character, and tells a dramatic story. The setting is laid in the prim gardens of an English ~~manor house in the~~ eighteenth century. The lady has dressed herself in her stiff brocades just as if she were preparing to receive her lover. She walks in the garden and recalls the story of her tragically broken love affair. She is "a pattern" of the well-bred ~~and~~ perfectly attired ~~eighteenth-century~~ belle; she observes the "patterns" in the garden; and finally she contemplates and rebels against the terrible "pattern" called war, which has robbed her of her promised husband. Every ~~line in~~ the poem suggests the atmosphere of the formal eighteenth century; every image emphasizes the pathos and tragedy of the young woman's unhappy experience. The form of the poem is unique. It is written in the irregular "cadenced verse" of which Miss Lowell was master, and yet it has rimes irregularly placed, sometimes in close proximity and sometimes four or five lines apart, and sometimes even side by side in the same line, as in line 22, "The daffodils and squills." All in all the poem is remarkably effective. It moves with a steadily increasing momentum and a unified precision—but always with the dignified propriety of the formal eighteenth century—to a powerful climax. "Patterns" will probably always be remembered as one of the masterpieces of the poetry of our time.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How are the formal eighteenth-century patterns of gardens and costumes suggested in the first movement (lines 1–9) of the poem? (2) How is the picture further developed in the second movement (lines 10–21)? Why does the lady weep? (3) What does the picture of the fountain suggest to the lady (lines 28–42)? (4) What scene does she recall in the next movement (lines 43–58)? (5) How is the tragic news received? Does the lady show her emotion before the footman? (6) In the last movement how do we get the impression that the lady will never get over her grief? (7) Read the poem aloud, following closely the varied cadences and striving to bring out the intense, but thoroughly mastered, emotion of the lady. (8) Study the rime scheme, noting some lines which have no rime and others in which the rimes fall close together or are widely separated. Study also the effective phrasal patterns, some of which are repeated throughout the poem.

Spring Day (Amy Lowell, p. 821)

INTRODUCTORY:

Polyphonic prose is a new type of verse invented by Amy Lowell in imitation of French forms, and practised successfully in English so far only by herself and another imagist poet, John Gould Fletcher, who is said to have suggested to Miss Lowell the name for this new form. Miss Lowell described the new form as follows: " 'Polyphonic' means 'many-voiced,' and the form is so-called because it makes use of all the 'voices' of poetry, namely: meter, *vers libre*, assonance, alliteration, rhyme, and return. It employs every form of rhythm, even prose rhythm at times."

"Spring Day," like "Patterns," appeared in *Some Imagist Poets* (1916), and was included in the 1916 volume, *Men, Women and Ghosts*, The whole poem should be read aloud as a succession of vivid images and impressions received by the sensitive poet throughout a spring day. The headings indicate the succession of events from the morning bath to falling asleep at night. You will find, however, that very early in the poem, the poet strikes in a certain phrase the dominant note of the freshness and exhilaration of spring. This phrase, repeated in varied form from time to time, permeates and completely synthesizes the poem.

EXPLANATORY:

822: 23. *catherine-wheel* A rotating firework; named from Saint Catherine of Alexandria, a Christian martyr who was tortured on a revolving wheel.

823: 52. *grisaille.* The greyish background of a cameo; a French word.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Read this polyphonic prose poem aloud, and listen closely for rimes, alliteration, and return or repetition. In the first sentence, for example, which forms a sort of refrain or dominant note repeated at intervals throughout the poem, you will find rime (*fair-there-air*), alliteration (*f*resh-washed and *f*air), assonance (fr*e*sh-sm*e*ll, w*a*shed-n*a*rcissus). You will find also many additional examples as you read on. Other rimes in this first section, for example, are *fours-bores*, *white-bright-light*, *ceiling-reeling*, *light-white-bright*, *day-play*, *sky-high*, *there-air*. You may now go on and work out a similar succession of rimes in the other sections. (2) Trace the use of the opening phrase as it is used here and there throughout the poem. Note how effectively the phraseology is varied. (3) Study the distinct images in each section. For example, note the varied images of the sunlight on the bath water in the first section. (4) Trace the color and appearance of the sky from morning to night. You will observe that the sky is mentioned in each section, usually with the riming word *high*, but each time with some variation of color or phrasing. (5) List the most striking images of the third section. (6) What effect have the short fragmentary sentences in the "Midday and Afternoon" section? Do you catch the rush and bustle of the city scene? (7) Can you visualize distinctly the brilliant display of electric signs as the night comes on? What particular signs are described? (8) What do the breaks(. . . .) near the close suggest? (9) How do you like polyphonic prose? Why is it so called?

The Garden by Moonlight (Amy Lowell, p. 825)

INTRODUCTORY:

Miss Lowell was extremely fond of gardens. Her first imagistic poem was called "In a Garden," the setting of "Patterns" is an eighteenth-century garden, and there are many references to flowers and gardens throughout her works. Here in "The Garden by Moonlight" we have an exquisite free-verse poem descriptive of the garden at "Severnel," Miss Lowell's ancestral home at Brookline, Massachusetts. There is a note of pathos in the conclusion, particularly now that Miss Lowell has actually passed on.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What black image is first noted? (2) What flowers are listed in the poem? (3) What is the general impression you get of the garden from such words as *dazed*, *contented*, *dreaming opium dreams?* (4) What lines present the image of the fireflies? .The moonbeams? The moving cat? (5) What personal note is introduced in the last lines? Why are these lines particularly pathetic?

A Lady (Amy Lowell, p. 825)

INTRODUCTORY:

Louis Untermeyer describes this delicate lyric as a "memorable Dresden-china portrait." The mood is subdued and reverent, and the various images blend to make a perfect tone-color poem.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How old do you imagine the lady to be? (2) What two images are first invoked? Why are the harpsichord and the eighteenth-century boudoir chosen? (3) What does the poet see in the lady's eyes? (4) What contrasted image is presented in the last lines? (5) Compare this portrait with that of the lady in "Patterns."

A Decade (Amy Lowell, p. 826)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem is included in *Pictures of the Floating World* under a section called "*Two Speak Together*." Here we have summed up in two striking images the contrast between youthful passionate love and the calm and satisfied love of mature life. One can imagine that it is a man speaking to his wife after ten years of happy married life. The poem admirably illustrates the more concentrated type of imagistic poetry practised by Miss Lowell.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What two images are contrasted in the poem? Comment on the appropriateness of these images in their representation of youthful and mature love. (2) Select the adjective in the following list which best describes the dominant tone of the poem: eager, ecstatic, contented, subdued, quiet, flat. (3) Why is the poem called "A Decade"? (4) On the whole how do you like Miss Lowell's poetry as presented in the five selections here given?

Irradiation V (Fletcher, p. 827)

INTRODUCTORY:

John Gould Fletcher (1886—) was born at Little Rock, Arkansas, and educated at Phillips Academy and Harvard, though he did not graduate from college. He has traveled widely and drawn many poetical pictures of scenes and impressions from the parts of the world where he has been. He joined the imagist group of poets in 1915 and contributed to each of the three annual anthologies published by this group in America. He draws remarkably striking and imaginative pictures of what he sees and experiences, and he has a clear grasp of the underlying principles of the new free-verse and polyphonic rhythms. He is primarily an impressionistic colorist in verse, as witness the selections here given, as well as the numerous poetic symphonies in color — green, blue, red, violet, orange, grey, white, gold, and several combinations of these. He is an extremely fluent writer. Of the dozen volumes already to his credit the best are *Irradiations; Sand and Spray* (1915), *Goblins and Pagodas* (1916), *Preludes and Symphonies* (1922). His pictorial effects and his rich use of colors and exotic and Oriental images make him a distinctive imagistic poet. His qualities are well represented in the two poems here given.

"Irradiation V" is a picture of cloud effects. The various formations and color combinations of clouds swiftly moving in the sunlight are clearly presented in this brief poem. The opening image is of the cloud shadows racing over roof-tops or charging like wild horses down the street; the central stanza enlarges on the rich color effects and peculiar cloud formations; and the final stanza repeats the opening image in identical form, thus giving an emphatic and effective conclusion to the whole.

EXPLANATORY:

827: 4. *Cinnabar.* A mercurial crystal of a cochineal or reddish color.

827: 5. *Lacquered mandarin moments.* A *mandarin* is a Chinese official who is usually dressed in richly colored silks; *moments* is used here in the sense of momentary appearances; *lacquered* means shining and smooth like the highly polished varnish on Oriental woodwork. The image is an effective one, but difficult to define.

827: 5. *palanquins.* A *palanquin* is a richly curtained hammock-like conveyance used in the Orient. It is swung on poles and is borne by two men, carrying usually a single passenger.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Have you ever watched cloud shadows racing over the earth? How does the poet present this image in the first two lines? (2) Study the different movements and color images applied to the clouds in the longer central stanza. How many distinct images are suggested? (3) In what verse form is the poem written? What effective examples of alliteration and adjacent rimes do you find in line 6? (4) Why is this selection a good example of the imagistic poem?

Mexican Quarter (Fletcher, p. 827)

INTRODUCTORY:

This poem appeared in the second volume of *Some Imagist Poets* (1916) in a group of four poems under the general heading of "Arizona." Fletcher had spent some time in Arizona just preceding the appearance of the volume named above, and as usual he had recorded his impressions of scenes in that country while they were fresh on his mind. Those who are familiar with the Mexican quarters in cities and towns in the southwestern part of our country will at once recognize the accuracy and poignancy of the picture presented here.

EXPLANATORY:

828: 20. *Madonna's image.* A figure representing the Virgin Mary. Images of the crucified Christ and the Virgin Mother are found in almost every Mexican home.

828: 41. *Babylon and Samarkand. Babylon*, on the Euphrates, was the capital of ancient Babylonia; *Samarkand*, in Turkestan, southwestern Asia, was the capital of the famous barbarian Emperor Tamerlane.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What details of the Mexican Quarter are given in the first stanza? Can you re-create clearly the whole scene? (2) What romantic incident is developed in the second and third stanzas? Note how evenly balanced and accurately paralleled these two stanzas are. (3) Study carefully the second stanza and answer these questions: What emotion does the Mexican girl display? Why are the stars described as an explosion? Why does the girl appeal to the Madonna and offer the stars to the image? Which stars does she reserve for herself and why? Do you suppose she wishes to adorn herself with stars to win back her lover? (4) What is the attitude of the lover as shown in the last stanza? What does he argue about love? Why is his song given in rime while the rest of the poem is in free verse?

Oread (H. D., p. 829)

INTRODUCTORY:

A poet of originality and individuality, a poet who is in no wise imitative, a poet who is steeped in the classic Greek spirit is Hilda Doolittle (now Mrs. Richard Aldington) who signs herself H. D. Miss Doolittle was born at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1886, but grew up in a suburb of Philadelphia where her father, Professor Charles L. Doolittle, the distinguished astronomer, was director of the Flower Observatory connected with the University of Pennsylvania. She was educated in private schools at Philadelphia and at Bryn Mawr College, though she did not graduate, and in 1911 she went abroad, traveled extensively on the continent, and then returned to London where she married the English poet Richard Aldington in 1913. Her first poems appeared in *Poetry* in 1913, and she contributed to *Des Imagistes* in 1914, and she and her husband were two of the six imagist poets who put out the three volumes of *Some Imagist Poets* in 1915, 1916, and 1917. Once having developed her own individual note, her own distinctive poetic idiom in the imagistic type of poetry, H. D. has continued to practise it in all she writes. She is the purest and most consistent of the imagists, and some critics esteem her as the one original poetic genius developed by the imagist movement. Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, and John Gould Fletcher, the other American members of the group, have written vastly more verse, experimented in many other types of poetry, and even ventured extensively into prose criticism, and thus they have become more widely known and more influential on other poets; but H. D. still holds to her own individual imagistic idiom, and her success is universally recognized. She has published several small volumes of verse, but her complete work up to 1924 is now available in the *Collected Poems of H. D.*, published by Boni and Liveright.

"Oread" is a fine example of the imagistic poem at its best. It first appeared in *Some Imagist Poets* (1915). The conception is Greek in its origin but thoroughly modern in its execution. The oread in classical mythology is a nymph, or sprite, associated with mountains, just as the dryad is associated with trees, and the naiad with fountains. The poet imagines herself in the position of one of a group of oreads sporting in the tops of a mountain forest of pines and firs. We see the waving of the evergreen trees in the figure of ocean waves tossing high. Three times the image of the tree tops is repeated in the figure of the green sea waves—the whirling up, the splashing on the rocks, and the quiet pools. Thus the unity of the image is maintained and emphasized. Read the poem in a tense, impassioned rhythm, keeping the figure of the ocean waves before your mind's eye, but remembering always that you are really looking at a group of oreads sporting themselves in the tops of the waving mountain pines and firs.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is an oread? (2) Where does the poet imagine the oreads to be? (3) What three images are suggested? (4) How do you like this imagistic type of poetry? You will note that there is no regular rime, but words like *whirl* and *pines* are repeated, and *hurl* echoes *whirl*, and *over us* and *cover us* give a pleasing sound effect, so that on the whole the poem is quite musical. Miss Lowell says the poem is made up of five cadences introduced by the five verbs.

Pear Tree (H. D., p. 829)

INTRODUCTORY:

The image presented in this poem is that of a pear tree in blossom in early spring. Silver is the emphatic image that comes to the poet's mind. Re-create, as you read, the beautiful picture of the pear tree in white blossoms, and try to catch the intensity of the emotion which the poet feels as she looks on the mass of silver-white blossoms.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What word gives the key to the image? How many times is this word repeated in the poem? (2) What repeated line shows that the blossoms are above reach? (3) What do the thick blossoms on the stems suggest for the future (last stanza)? (4) What repetitions and paralleled phrases help to make the poem musical?

Orchard (H. D., p. 830)

INTRODUCTORY:

Miss Lowell once said of H. D., "To this poet, beauty is a thing so sharp as to be painful, delight so poignant it can scarcely be borne." Here as the poet contemplates the beautiful fruits in the orchard, the emotion aroused becomes so intense as to be almost unbearable. The yellow swarm of bees go humming about their honey-seeking in a business-like way, but the sensitive poet cries "spare us from loveliness!" Note particularly the rich offering laid at the feet of the rough-hewn statue of the god of the orchard (last stanza). The poem first appeared in *Des Imagistes* (1914) under the title "Priapus—Keeper of Orchards." Priapus in Greek mythology was the god of fruitfulness and keeper of orchards, vineyards, etc. His statues were hewn out of rough blocks of stone broader at the base than above and surmounted by rough head-pieces stained in a reddish color.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What prayer does the poet make as she sees the first pear fall? (2) What image is recalled in lines 9 and 10 (see the preceding poem "Pear Tree")? (3) Enumerate the gifts offered to the god of the orchard. What was the name of this god, and what kind of statues were made to represent him? (4) Study closely the adjectives and descriptive phrases applied to the different fruits. If you were an artist, could you draw a picture from the images presented in the poem? Just how would you arrange the picture?

Lethe (H. D., p. 831)

INTRODUCTORY:

This richly melodious song will give you an idea of how the imagist poet uses rime and a more regular stanzaic pattern. The theme is forgetfulness. In Greek mythology Lethe is the river of forgetfulness, or oblivion, in Hades, the underworld. If one once drinks from this river, all memories of the past are forever obliterated. What the poet is saying here is that all memory of pleasant and beautiful things is lost in Lethe. All beautiful clothing and shelters, all beautiful objects in the natural world, even all tokens of human tenderness and love shall be forgotten, and only the desire to be overwhelmed in forgetfulness shall remain.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the principal thought in the poem "Lethe"? (2) How does the poet suggest the Greek setting in the first stanza? In the second? (3) What lines rime in each stanza? (4) Compare the form of this poem with the form of the other poems by this poet. Which form do you like better, the regular rimed stanza of this poem or the free-cadenced stanza of the preceding poems?

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE LYRISTS

Apart from the poets we have studied under the groupings of "Voices of the New America" and "The Imagists," there are numerous others who do not fall into either of these categories. Of these, some of the later and more radical poets will be studied in a subsequent group entitled "The Experimenters." The rest are included in the present grouping under the general rubric of "The Lyrists." Some of these lyrists may be regarded as transitional poets bridging the gap between Lanier and other nineteenth-century poets and those of the present day. Into this group fall such writers as John Hall Wheelock, William Ellery Leonard, John G. Neihardt, and Alan Seeger. They are in line with the best traditional poetry; but they also belong to the newer poetry, and hence they are placed here rather than in the group called "Transitional Poets." But others have lifted definitely new lyrical voices of their own and expressed themselves in a manner heretofore unheard in this country. Perhaps the best representatives of this later group are Edna St. Vincent Millay and Elinor Wylie.

It is characteristic of all the more recent lyrists that their melodies are somewhat less obvious than poetry of the period of Longfellow and Tennyson. Their technique is also more rigid, and their subject-matter is definitely unsentimental. At times they are also humorous or satirical; but for the most part they are sober and serious in their effort to produce a new kind of poetry. And one writer in this group, William Ellery Leonard, has written a long sonnet sequence called *Two Lives* (1925) which ranks with the most significant poetical documents of our present-day literature. The notes below will give specific information and brief criticism on each of the lyrists included here. It goes without saying that the poets selected represent only a small part of the rich lyric output of recent years.

The Water Ouzel, The Telephone, and **The Blue Ridge**
(Monroe, pp. 832-833)

INTRODUCTORY:

Miss Harriet Monroe, founder and continuous editor of *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse* (1912), has been called "the priestess of poetry." When in the future the authoritative history of the modern renaissance in English and American poetry shall be written, the name, influence, and directive power of this frail little woman will loom large. Though she is in her creative work a poet of talent, she will doubtless be best remembered for her encouraging and illuminating criticism in *Poetry* and for her excellent taste and discernment in compiling in collaboration with Mrs. Alice Corbin Henderson the notable anthology, *The New Poetry* (1917, enlarged 1923). In addition to her arduous and continuous service as a critic of contemporary poetry, she has published three volumes of verse, *Valeria and Other Poems* (1892), *You and I* (1914), and *The Difference and Other Poems* (1924), and also one volume of plays in verse, *The Passing Show* (1903), a pioneer book in this kind of art. She was born in Chicago, educated in Visitation Academy, Washington, D. C., and she has lived in Chicago all her life, though she has traveled extensively in Europe and in America, delivering lectures and readings and searching for new poets everywhere. Her first notable poem, her "Columbian Ode," written in 1892 at the request of the Joint Committee on the World's Columbian Exposition, was set to music by George W. Chadwick, of Boston, and read and sung at the dedication ceremonies, October 23, 1892, the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. The ode was recently republished in its final authorized form in *The Difference and Other Poems*, as a sort of connecting link between Miss Monroe's aspiring youthful productions and her maturer work of later years. The three poems given in our text illustrate Miss Monroe's handling of nature themes in free verse and of a modern theme in the sonnet form. "The Water Ouzel" is something more than a mere picture of the wild bird in its natural habitat; it represents the spirit of adventure and daring which finds happiness in braving the cataracts and plunging into the torrents of modern life. "The Telephone" is a sonnet on one of the marvels of modern civilization. Miss Monroe, along with other later poets, finds poetry in such subjects as "The Hotel," "The Turbine," "The Ocean Liner," "A Power Plant," and the like. The last selection, "The Blue Ridge," is a fine example of Miss Monroe's passion for the great elemental forces in nature.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In what part of the country does the poet find the water ouzel? What rivers are mentioned? (2) What is your interpretation of the bird's habit of plunging through mad waters? (3) What spirit

is invoked in the opening lines of "The Telephone?" (4) Are the marvels of the invention adequately presented in the sonnet? (5) From what point of view and at what time of day do you imagine the poet looks at the Blue Ridge Mountains? (6) Why is the adjective *purple* used in line 2, and what effective figure is used in lines 5 and 6? (7) What paradoxes do you find in the second movement? This is an excellent example of the free-verse poem in two distinct cadences.

The Black Vulture, Aldeberan at Dusk, and **Silence**

(Sterling, pp. 834-835)

INTRODUCTORY:

George Sterling (1869–1926), though born in Sag Harbor, New York, and educated at St. Charles College, Ellicott City, Maryland, is recognized as the most distinguished of our far Western poets. He lived in San Francisco for many years and was thoroughly identified with his adopted state. He belonged rather distinctly to the older rhetorical type of poets, though he was more than a mere imitator of the great masters of the past. His sonnets have been particularly admired, though he wrote much good verse in other forms, lyric, ballad, epic, and dramatic. He published ten separate books, ranging from the ambitious *Testimony of the Suns* (1903) and the lyric *The Wine of Wizardry* (1908) to the dramatic poems *Truth* in 1923 and *Lilith* in 1926. In 1923 also his publishers deemed him worthy of commemoration in a volume of *Selected Poems*. The three sonnets selected here illustrate the characteristic elevated rhetorical power of his verse.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What picture is presented in the octave (first eight lines) of "The Black Vulture"? (2) What new idea is developed in the sestet (last six lines)? (3) What is the form of this sonnet, Italian or English? (4) Locate the star Aldeberan in the constellation Taurus. It is the brightest star in the V-shaped figure of this constellation and one of the most brilliant of all the stars in the heavens. (5) What is the main thought of the sonnet "Silence"? Are there in the universe sounds so great that the human ear cannot compass them? Are these vast vibrations, then, "essential silence"? (6) What four huge sounds are enumerated in the octave, and what three huger vibrations are suggested in the sestet? (7) Which of these three sonnets do you like best? Read each over aloud several times before you make your decision.

The Son (Torrence, p. 836)

INTRODUCTORY:

(Frederic) Ridgely Torrence (1875—) was born in Xenia, Ohio, and educated by private tutors and at Miami University, Ohio, and Princeton University, though he never graduated. After leaving college he was appointed librarian of the Astor Library, New York City, and later of the Lenox Library. Then he became an assistant editor of *The Critic* and later associate editor of the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. At present he is the poetry editor of the *New Republic*. He issued his initial volume, *The House of a Hundred Lights*, in 1900, and for twenty-five years he quietly developed his talent, bringing out his second volume of lyric verse, *Hesperides*, in 1925. In the meantime he published two poetical dramas and three short prose plays, and occasionally short poems appeared in various magazines. With the publication of his recent volume, Torrence takes rank with the best of the more conservative poets of modern times. He never indulges in the newer and more radical forms of verse, but contents himself with the established patterns of rimed stanzas. He has, nevertheless, a distinct modern touch, and his work will doubtless be remembered as that of one of the genuine poets of our time. "The Son" is a fine example of the pure technique of the older conservative form modernized by the condensed suggestiveness of the newer style of thought. We are not directly told that the old farm-wife's son died, but in her broken utterances we cannot miss the loneliness of her heart and the pathos of her grief at his going. This short lyric suggests the suffering and tragedy of a whole lifetime.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What pathetic situation is presented in this poem? (2) What does the old woman mean by saying "We're just two now"? (3) How does the farm-wife "mingle her life with life"? (4) Just what does she mean to imply by saying "the harvest was early"? (5) Note the naturalness and simplicity of the language and the verse form. Are the masculine and feminine rimes arranged consistently in the four stanzas?

Let the Past Die and **I Feel Me Near to Some High Thing**
(Leonard, p. 837)

INTRODUCTORY:

William Ellery Leonard (1876—) was born in Plainfield, N. J. He graduated with the A. B. degree from Boston University in 1898 and took his A. M. at Harvard in 1899, after which he studied at the Universities of Göttingen and Bonn in Germany on a fellowship from Boston University, returning to Columbia University to take his Ph. D. in 1904. He engaged in teaching and editorial work until 1906, when he was elected to the English faculty of the University of Wisconsin, where he now is. He represents the unusual type of the scholar and the poet combined in one. He has written learned monographs, translated Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, German, and Dutch poetry and plays, and published a number of volumes of original verse, *Sonnets and Poems* (1906), *The Vaunt of Man* (1912), *The Lynching Bee* (1920), *Tutankhamen* (1924), *Two Lives* (1925). *The Vaunt of Man* is perhaps Professor Leonard's most representative volume, though *The Lynching Bee* contains some poems of fiery energy and bold protest; and *Two Lives*, a sonnet sequence which tells the tragic story of the poet's marriage to a refined young woman who was tainted with insanity and who eventually committed suicide. Though this is Leonard's masterpiece, we are not permitted to quote any part of it in this anthology. "Let the Past Die" is a sonnet which sets forth with strong ethical import the idea that the past cannot die but is an ever-active element in our present. "I Feel Me Near to Some High Thing" celebrates the mystical mood which comes over the daring soul in some high moment of inspiration or exaltation preceding a noble action.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the theme of the sonnet? Can one "let the past die"? (2) What is the poet's reaction to the struggles and defects of his past? (3) In what form is the sonnet cast, English or Italian? (4) What mood is celebrated in "I Feel Me Near to Some High Thing"? (5) Have you ever felt such a mood? (6) What are some of the evidences of the coming on of some "High Thing" in one's life?

November Night, Triad, The Warning, Song, and **Dirge**
(Crapsey, pp. 838–839)

INTRODUCTORY:

Adelaide Crapsey (1878–1914) was born in Rochester, New York, was graduated from Vassar in 1901, and taught literature and history in Kenosha, Wisconsin, for several years. She went abroad in 1905 and studied in Rome. When she resumed her work as a teacher, accepting a position in Smith College, her health failed, and she was forced into retirement. It was during these later years that she began to write poetry. She originated a peculiar verse form which she called the cinquain. It is a five-line poem consisting of twenty-two syllables, running 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables successively in the five lines. In this peculiar pattern, which reminds us very much of the Japanese hokku of seventeen syllables, she set forth her delicate and beautiful thoughts. There is a solemn, a supernatural note, and frequently a melancholy suggestion of impending death in these condensed, fragile, sharply chiseled poetical cameos. Her early death cut off a most promising career. Carl Sandburg has written a lovely tribute to the frail poet in his "Adelaide Crapsey." The three cinquains and the two other lyrics chosen here all touch in some way on the theme of death. "November Night" presents an image of a dead leaf falling on a cold November night; "Triad" presents three silent things, concluding with "the mouth of one just dead"; "The Warning" is the flight of a moth, the symbol of death; "Song" is sung by the poet as she stitches her own shroud; and "Dirge" expresses the deep regret of the sensitive poet at the thought of leaving all the delights of nature and love when death comes to take her away. Study out the form of the cinquains and the songs, and read each of the poems softly and quietly as if you were conscious of the presence of death.

Good Company and **Winter Flowers** (Baker, p. 840)

INTRODUCTORY:

Mrs. Karle Wilson Baker (1878—) was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and educated in the public schools of her native city and at Little Rock Academy and Chicago University. At Chicago she studied under the poet William Vaughn Moody. In 1907 she married Thomas Ellis Baker of Nacogdoches, Texas. She has published poems, essays, and stories in many magazines, and she has two volumes of poems, two of stories, and one primary school book to her credit. Her best poems are to be found collected in *Blue Smoke* (1919) and *The Burning Bush* (1922). She is a woman of quiet refinement and domestic propensities, finding her greatest happiness in caring for her interesting family and in recording her delicate perceptions of the simple life about her. She is particularly successful in extracting new beauties from nature and the commonplace scenes of the small town life in which she lives. The two poems on page 840 illustrate her delicate workmanship and her ability to find fresh and original images in the commonplace.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What four concrete objects are the inspiration of the two stanzas of "Good Company"? (2) What is the effect on the poet of these natural objects? (3) Interpret the three winter flowers presented in the three stanzas of the second poem. (4) Comment on the simplicity, delicacy, and beauty of the style and imagery of these two poems.

When I Am Dead and **Battle-Cry** (Neihardt, p. 841)

INTRODUCTORY:

John Gneisenau Neihardt (1881—) has the rare distinction of being an official state poet laureate, Nebraska by an act of the State Legislature (1921) having conferred this honor on him. He was born in Sharpsburg, Illinois, a descendant of a noble Bavarian family and of a long line of hardy American pioneers. In his youth his family moved around considerably, stopping for a time at Springfield, Illinois, and Kansas City, Missouri, spending a year on a farm in northwestern Kansas, moving on to Wayne, Nebraska, where they stayed a few years, and finally settling at Bancroft, Nebraska. The young man worked hard to gain an education. For three years he earned his way at the Nebraska Normal College in Wayne by ringing the college bell to signal the change of classes. He finished the scientific course at this school in 1896, and later (1917) he was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature by the University of Nebraska. In 1919 he won the national prize from the Poetry Society of America for the best volume of verse published by an American in that year, *The Song of Three Friends* being the book thus honored. From 1901 to 1907 he lived among the Omaha Indians, studying their customs, life, character, and history. He has long been engaged in a close study of the whole country drained by the Missouri River system, having conceived the idea of writing an authentic American epic with the bold and courageous scouts, trappers, and pioneers of the middle-western border — and their opponents, the notable Indian chiefs — as his heroes. He has already completed three units of his extensive design, namely, *The Song of Hugh Glass* (1915), *The Song of Three Friends* (1919), and *The Song of the Indian Wars* (1925), and more are to follow. These efforts undoubtedly rank among the noblest and most entrancing of modern narrative poems, challenging comparison with the best products of John Masefield and Alfred Noyes in England and overtopping all recent American efforts in this kind of verse. Already the first two of these poems have appeared in school editions, and there seems little doubt but that the completed series will eventually take high rank among the permanent classics of our literature. In addition to these extended narrative poems, Neihardt has published several individual volumes of shorter poems, the best of his work in this kind having been collected in a volume called *Quest* (1916). He has also written two notable plays in verse, published under the title of *The Two Mothers* (1926); a volume of short stories, *The Lonesome Trail* (1907);

and a volume of philosophic criticism entitled *Poetic Values* (1925), being two lectures delivered at the University of Nebraska. For many years he conducted a literary page in the Minneapolis *Journal* and for three years was a reviewer for the *New York Times Saturday Book Review*, and thus broadened his reading and further developed his critical powers. He has resisted all temptations to debase what he conceives to be his divine call to be a poet, refusing to write for money or popular applause, preferring rather to listen to "The Voice" and devote himself to the higher aims of his art. In 1923 he was appointed Honorary Professor of Poetry at the University of Nebraska, and he has recently had many invitations to lecture and read his poetry at various colleges and universities. In 1926 Neihardt resumed his journalistic work by becoming the editor of the literary page of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*. The following poems illustrate his vigorous, straightforward manner of writing. "When I am Dead" rises through a series of tender love images to a sudden and terrific climax of jealous revenge in the closing line. "Battle-Cry" is a stirring song of courage and endurance in the face of apparently overwhelming odds; this is an inspiring and invigorating lyric worthy of being committed to memory as a resource of comfort in times of trouble or impending defeat. The poem has been used many times in public addresses by men of distinction.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In what ways does the lover say his spirit will continue after death to commune with the beloved? (2) What strong feeling arises as the lover thinks of being forgotten by his beloved? (3) What mood is expressed in "Battle-Cry"? (4) What virtue does Neihardt in this poem seem to exalt above all others? (5) Does he find the glory of life in victory or in the will to fight on against great odds? (6) Memorize this poem.

Beauty and **Don Quixote** (Ficke, p. 843)

INTRODUCTORY:

Arthur Davison Ficke (1883—) was born in Davenport, Iowa, took his bachelor's degree at Harvard in 1900, and later studied law and taught English for a year at the State University of Iowa. He was admitted to the bar in 1908 and practised his profession until he entered service for the World War in 1917, in which service he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Since the war he has dropped out of the legal profession and opened a studio in New York City, where he is devoting himself entirely to poetry and art. Ficke began publishing in 1907, and in the intervening years he has put forth a dozen volumes. As an amateur student of art he has made a specialty of Japanese prints, and much of his poetry deals with the emotional life of artists. His *Sonnets of a Portrait Painter* (1914) is a narrative poem presenting in an exquisite sequence the love affair of an artist. This is the best known of his volumes of poetry, though his earlier books, and particularly his latest, *Out of Silence* (1924), contain much highly finished verse. The sonnet is more frequently used by him than any other verse form, though he resents being designated by "that awful word *sonneteer*," saying that he has no brief for any particular form and that he chooses the sonnet only when it seems to be the form best adapted to express the idea he has in mind at the moment. Of the two sonnets here chosen to represent his work one is taken from *Sonnets of a Portrait Painter* and the other from a sequence of five sonnets on "Don Quixote" written in France during the war in an attempt to forget realities.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Is it easy to define Beauty? What suggestive flashes of beauty does the poet present in the opening lines of the sonnet? (2) In lines 5 to 9 how is Beauty represented? (3) What exalted place does Beauty hold in the life of man? (4) Why is Don Quixote called "dearest of all the heroes?" Who is the author of the romance in which the hero appears, and when and why was the book written? (5) *La Mancha* is the old district in Spain from which Don Quixote came. For what is this district now chiefly remembered?

Barter and **Swallow Flight** (Teasdale, p. 844)

INTRODUCTORY:

Sara Teasdale (1884—), formerly of St. Louis, Missouri, but now living in New York City, became Mrs. Ernest B. Felsinger in 1914. Under her maiden name, which she continues to use in her literary work, she had already won a high place among modern lyrists by her chaste sonnets, her beautiful love songs, and her charming nature lyrics; and since her marriage she has continued publishing volumes of lyrics in the style of her earlier work, but woven perhaps with a stronger warp of thought and a firmer woof of emotion. The titles of her volumes of original verse are *Sonnets to Duse* (1907), *Helen of Troy* (1911), *Rivers to the Sea* (1915), *Love Songs* (1917), *Flame and Shadow* (1920), *Dark of the Moon* (1926). Optimistic belief in the power and enchantment of beauty was never better expressed than in the poem "Barter," which we are permitted to reprint in this book. "Swallow Flight" is, as its name implies, but a brief figure of the poet's swift flashes of insight and the graceful dips of her spirit into the mysteries of life.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) The first two stanzas enumerate some of the beautiful things of life, and the third stanza makes the appeal that we should buy loveliness at whatever cost. Make a list of the images of beautiful things mentioned in the poem. (2) Does the poet tell us how we can buy loveliness? Can you suggest the best means by which we may learn to love beauty? (3) Why is the poem called "Barter?" (4) In "Swallow Flight" what things are enumerated that the poet especially loves? (5) Why is the last one of these compared with the swallow's flight?

The Black Panther (Wheelock, p. 845)

INTRODUCTORY:

John Hall Wheelock (1886—) was born at Far Rockaway, Long Island, New York. He graduated with the A. B. degree from Harvard in 1908, and then spent two years in further study at the Universities of Göttingen and Berlin, in Germany. On his return to America he entered the service of Charles Scribner's Sons in New York and has remained with these publishers ever since. He began publishing in 1911 with *The Human Fantasy*, a volume of remarkable lyric promise, and followed this rapidly with other volumes. He writes mostly nature lyrics and love poems with a touch of mysticism. His later books are *The Beloved Adventure* (1912), *Love and Liberation* (1913), *Dust and Light* (1919), *Black Panther* (1922). His last two volumes are perhaps his best. "Black Panther," a sonnet of easy grace and strong imaginative power, illustrates this poet's gift of interpreting nature through mystical or symbolic application to human life. Work out carefully the picture of the caged panther as presented in the sonnet. Do you get a vivid image of the caged animal and at the same time of the restless and writhing turmoil of the unsatisfied human spirit?

The Woven Doom (Wheelock, p. 845)

INTRODUCTORY:

This is a poem of the more serious and elevated type, its theme being the essential unity and solidarity of all life. There is both strength and nobility in the thought and in the rhythm of the long, stately stanzas. The three distinct phases of the thought are expressed in the first lines of the three stanzas: (1) We are all of one weaving; (2) we are all in one story; (3) we are all passing to the same end—but not alone "For One is all, and all are One." The confident faith of the poet in the One Being who unifies and controls the destiny of all life is strongly expressed in the concluding lines. Though the stanzas are of fourteen lines each, they may not be called sonnets, for the sonnet requires five stresses and a more definite rime scheme, whereas we have here only four stresses to each line and an irregular rime scheme. While the fundamental rhythm is iambic, it is skilfully modulated by frequent changes through substitutions, variations, inversions, and shiftings of accent. The rimes are placed far apart, the first seven lines of each stanza being answered by the last seven in the following order; *abcdefg abgdcfe*. Study the poem closely, and read it aloud several times in a dignified, elevated tone, and in slow, stately tempo. You will find that the oftener you read the stanzas the more you will come to like them.

Night (Benét, p. 847)

INTRODUCTORY:

William Rose Benét (1886—) was born in Fort Hamilton, New York, and educated at Albany Academy and the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University, from which university he graduated as A. B. in 1909 and received an honorary A. M. in 1921. After graduation he went to California and became a free-lance writer, contributing, mostly poetry, to various periodicals. In 1911 he returned to New York to become a reader and later an assistant editor on the *Century Magazine*. When war was declared in 1917, he entered the Air Service and was made a second lieutenant, though he did not engage in flying. After the war he returned to New York and resumed his literary and journalistic activities, being for a time associate editor of the *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post*. After the death of his first wife, to whom he addressed a memorial volume, he married the poet Elinor Wylie (q. v.), and the two are now happily engaged in literary work in New York City, Mr. Benét being associate editor of the *Saturday Review of*

Literature, to which he contributes each week a lively letter of literary chat under the caption of *The Phoenix Nest.* He has published five volumes of poetry, one novel, and a delightful anthology called *Poems for Youth* (1925). In this volume he included selections from his sister Laura Benét (1884—), his brother Stephen Vincent Benét (1898—), and his wife Elinor Wylie, but modesty forbade him to include a single one of his own poems, a fortuitous circumstance which gives the present anthologist at least one advantage, namely, the privilege of making a selection from the most distinguished member of this family of gifted poets. Benét's best poetry is found in *Merchants of Cathay* (1913), *The Falconer of God* (1914), *Perpetual Light* (1919, a memorial to his first wife), and *Moons of Grandeur* (1920). He has a swift and daring imagination and is able to present the wildest fancies in vivid and convincing phrases, as for example in his "The Horse Thief," the story of a cowboy who lassoed the mythical winged horse Pegasus and took a wild ride through the constellations, and in his "Falconer of God," the story of a man's religious and artistic experience set forth under the symbolism of a falconer (the human spirit) striving to capture a heron (the flying symbol of beauty). In one of his earlier poems called "Night" he expresses in a bewitching lyric both the terrors and the delights of the spirit of night. This poem was singled out by Thomas Bird Mosher as one of the permanent lyrics of modern poetry.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What dread associations of night are enumerated in the first stanza, and what wish is expressed in the concluding lines? (2) What delightful associations of night are presented in the second stanza, and what wish is expressed in the two concluding lines? (3) How are the ideas of the two preceding stanzas fused in the final stanza?

Trees and **Easter** (Kilmer, p. 848)

INTRODUCTORY:

(Alfred) Joyce Kilmer (1886–1918), born two years before Alan Seeger and dying two years after him, is ranked along with that poet as one of the two greatest losses sustained by American poetry during the World War. His birthplace was New Brunswick, New Jersey. He had Irish, English, French, and Scotch blood in his veins, but he was most of all Irish, or, as he himself playfully said: "Though I am not good at mathematics, I am sure I am half-Irish." He was graduated from Rutgers College in 1904 and then took extra work and earned his A. B. from Columbia University in 1906. Immediately after his graduation he married Miss Aline Murray, who since her husband's death has become herself a poet of distinction. For a short time he taught school, but he soon gave up pedagogy for journalism. He went to New York, and with a brave heart in his breast and a few manuscript poems in his pocket he found employment as editor of a journal for horsemen, a position which he lost through an honest but unfavorable criticism of a work by the proprietor of the journal. He then turned to other jobs, selling books in Charles Scribner's Sons' retail store; writing definitions for the *Standard Dictionary*, composing meditations for *The Churchman*, an Episcopalian periodical of which he was for a time the editor, dashing off brilliant book notices for the *Nation* and the *New York Times Book Review*, conducting the poetry departments for *Current Literature* and the *Literary Digest*; preparing special articles for the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, and contributing essays to various other magazines and newspapers. His energy seemed inexhaustible, and his output of journalistic copy was prodigious. All the while he was writing occasional poetry, most of his earlier work being frankly imitative. Finally he struck his own stride in poetry of a religious or mystical type. In the August, 1913, number of *Poetry* appeared his "*Trees*," a poem of twelve lines that made him famous. He considered all his early poems, the best of which had appeared in *Summer of Love* (1911), as mere technical exercises, and he expressed the wish that all of these early effusions might be forgotten, though he admitted that those which expressed genuine love were things not to be ashamed of. *Trees and Other Poems* (1914) he thought more highly of, and *Main Street and Other Poems* (1917) contains his best later work. Kilmer, who was always religiously inclined, had been connected with the Episcopal Church, in which for a time he was a lay reader, but when his little daughter Rose was attacked by infantile paralysis and he fell under the influence of the Catholic poets Francis Thompson, Coventry Patmore, and others, he was led toward the Catholic Church. He and his wife were confirmed in 1913, and from that time until his death Kilmer was a faithful and earnest devotee of the Roman Church. When the United States entered the World War, though under the law he would not have been drafted, he immediately prepared to enlist. In his impatience to see active service he declined to enter a training camp for officers, but joined the Seventh Regiment of New York as a private. He was later transferred at his own request to the Irish regiment, the 165th Infantry, the new name of the old "fighting 69th." He was soon at the front, and his bravery, ability, and energy won him promotion to a sergeantship. He was killed in action on July 20, 1918, at the river Ourcq section of the battle of the Marne. Shortly after his death his collected poems, essays, and letters were published in two volumes with a brilliant "Memoir" by his friend Robert Cortes Holliday. "Trees" is a remarkable example of the fusion of nature, art, and religious fervor. It was written when Kilmer was turning his thoughts most earnestly toward eternal things. He was just at this time making his final step toward the Catholic Church, and he expresses in the poem his inviolate faith in the supremacy of the works of God over those of man, drawing a striking comparison between a poem and a tree, ending with the abrupt avowal,

> Poems are made by fools like me,
> But only God can make a tree.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) With what idea does the poem open and close? (2) What striking images of the tree are presented in the second and third couplets? (3) How is the tree personified in the fourth and fifth stanzas? (4) Memorize the poem. (5) In the little poem "Easter" what perhaps suggested to the poet the image of the frail blue butterfly? (6) Why does the earth look up, and why does it sing? (7) Do you find in both these poems evidences of Kilmer's strong religious convictions?

Velvet Shoes and **The Eagle and the Mole** (Elinor Wylie, pp. 849–850)

INTRODUCTORY:

Elinor Wylie (1887—) is one of the most promising of the younger American poets. She was born in Pennsylvania but has lived most of her life in Washington, D. C., where her father, Henry Martyn Hoyt, was Solicitor General during President Roosevelt's administration. She is a highly sensitive and passionate creature and has been writing poetry since her childhood. She was twice married and had unhappy experiences. Later she met William Rose Benét (q.v) and was happily married to him in 1923, though she still writes under the name of Elinor Wylie, the surname being that of her second husband. Her early poems are now out of print, but *Nets to Catch the Wind* (1921) and *Black Armour* (1924) are sufficient to prove her right to be called a distinguished contemporary poet. She has also written three widely read novels, *Jenifer Lorn* (1923), *The Venetian Glass Nephew* (1925), and *The Orphan Angel* (1926). The two lyrics given here illustrate her delicate fancy and charming music.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the theme of "Velvet Shoes"? Is the symbolism of the title appropriate to the theme? (2) Compare the poem with Madison Cawein's "Snow," p. 773, and determine which of the two is the better artistic production. (3) What two types of life are symbolized in "The Eagle and the Mole"? Do you think that the poet here means to condemn the mediocrity of the average individual? (4) Study the verse forms of these two lovely lyrics and determine which of them is most musical. (5) Which of the two poems do you like better? Why?

Ellis Park and **The Sense of Death** (Hoyt, pp. 851–852)

INTRODUCTORY:

Helen Hoyt (1887—) (Mrs. W. W. Lyman) was for a number of years associate editor of *Poetry, A Magazine of verse.* It was while she was in Chicago that she wrote the poem which has brought her most fame, "Ellis Park." Later she married and moved to St. Helena, California. She has published a number of poems in *Poetry* and other periodicals, and her love poems have been collected into a small volume called *Apples Here in My Basket.* She is intensely, realistically, and sincerely subjective in all that she writes. Poetry to her is but the concrete expression of her own thoughts and emotions. She reveals a woman's heart in her love poems and a woman's sensitiveness to beauty in her nature lyrics. We are permitted to reproduce here her most famous poem, "Ellis Park," a remarkably attractive reflection of the influence of one of Chicago's beautiful woodland parks on a sensitive spirit; and "The Sense of Death," a more conventional lyric which presents the novel thought that the consciousness of inevitable death reacts to produce a deeper appreciation of the wonderful blessings of being alive.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does the worker in the city manage to carry off something of the park each day? (2) What are some of the influences of the park which persist through the day? (3) What is the effect of speaking

directly to the park as if it were a person? (4) In the second poem what reaction results as the poet becomes conscious of the sense of death? (5) How are repetition and parallelism used to enhance the musical effect of the stanza pattern in "The Sense of Death"?

I Have a Rendezvous with Death (Seeger, p. 853)

INTRODUCTORY:

Alan Seeger (1888–1916) is one of those pathetic figures, "the inheritors of unfulfilled renown." He was born in New York City, grew up on Staten Island, spent part of his youth in Mexico, attended Harvard University, where he graduated in 1910, and then in 1913 went to Paris for further study in preparation for a career of authorship. When the World War began in 1914, he immediately joined the Foreign Legion to fight for France. He saw active service on several fronts for nearly two years, and on July 4, 1916, when his regiment was ordered to clear the village of Belloy-en-Santerre of Germans, he was mowed down by a terrific machine-gun fire and died of his wounds the next morning. With an uncanny premonition of death he wrote his most famous poem, "I Have a Rendezvous with Death." It is perhaps the finest war poem written by a soldier in arms during the World War, and it will as inevitably bear Seeger's name down the centuries as Rupert Brooke's five beautiful sonnets "1914," written similarly just before he died in the Aegean Sea, will carry the English poet's name to future ages. In 1916 Seeger's *Poems* were published with an introduction by William Archer, but none of the other poems in the volume quite reaches the height attained in "I Have a Rendezvous with Death."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the meaning of the word *rendezvous*? (2) Do you think the young poet dreaded to keep the rendezvous with death? Quote lines to prove your answer. (3) Note that the stanzas increase in length as they proceed. What is the effect of this increased volume?

Soldier-Poet (Allen, p. 854)

INTRODUCTORY:

(William) Hervey Allen (1889—) was born at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, attended the United States Naval Academy for one year and then entered the Univeristy of Pittsburgh, where he graduated in 1915. He served as a second lieutenant on the Mexican border in 1916 and as a first lieutenant in the World War. He was wounded in action in 1918, after which event he became an instructor in English in the French Military Mission. After returning to America he taught English in Porter Military Academy, Charleston, South Carolina, for a year or two, and then became instructor in English in the Charleston High School, a position which he held until recently, when he moved to New York City to become a member of the teaching staff of Columbia University. During his residence in Charleston he was active in the founding of the Poetry Society of South Carolina, and with Du Bose Heyward, another Charleston poet, he published but *Carolina Chansons* (1922), a volume of poems dealing largely with southern scenes and themes. He had previously published two small but promising books called *Wampum and Old Gold* (1921) and *The Bride of Huitzil* (1922), and in 1923 appeared *The Blindman.* His latest volume, *Earth Moods* (1925), contains his most ambitious efforts. In the longer poems in this last volume he boldly attempts to trace in picturesque rhythmic form the process of evolution from the vacant, seething earth of the beginning on through the various periods in the slow growth of civilization down to the present. The sonnet given here is a poem celebrating the death of Francis Fowler Hegan, one of his comrades in the battle of Argonne Forest during the World War. It is not unworthy of comparison with Rupert Brooke's war sonnets or Alan Seeger's "I Have a Rendezvous with Death."

Music I Heard and **Variation VI** and **VII** (Aiken, pp. 855–856)

INTRODUCTORY:

Conrad (Potter) Aiken (1889—) was born at Savannah, Georgia, went to Harvard University, where he graduated A. B. in 1911, has traveled widely and come under many varied literary influences, and is in a certain sense our most cosmopolitan contemporary poet. He is a student and a critic as well as a creator of literature. His book of criticism called *Scepticisms* (see selection on p. 749) sets forth his theories of art and fearlessly evaluates the poetry of the present time. Most of his poems are long and definitely philosophical, but in them one frequently comes across passages of sheer lyricism which justifies his inclusion in the group of contemporary lyrists. He has attempted to create a type of poetry more closely allied to the methods of the musical symphony, and through this effort he has been able to effect some remarkable musical and rhythmical combinations in his lyrics. The musical idea persists through all his volumes of poetry: *Earth Triumphant* (1914); *Turns and Movies* (1916); *The Jig of Forslin* (1916, revised 1922); *Nocturne of Remembered Spring* (1917, revised 1922); *The Charnel Rose* (1918); *The House of Dust* (1920); *Punch, The Immortal Liar* (1922); *Priapus and the Pool* (1922); *Pilgrimage of Festus* (1923).

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In "Music I Heard" what is it that makes music more than music and bread more than bread? (2) How many images are drawn from clouds and stars in the first two stanzas of "Variation VI"? (3) What new image is introduced in the third stanza? (4) What season of the year is suggested by the image in the first stanza of "Variation VII"? (5) What beautiful and romantic dream does this image evoke? (6) Read the poems aloud for their musical effects. Could they be easily set to music? Which of the three songs do you admire most?

At the Symphony and **The Poet Sings to Himself** (Nathan, p. 857)

INTRODUCTORY:

Robert Nathan (1894—) was born of Jewish parents in New York City and was educated in private schools in the United States and in Switzerland. He attended Harvard for a time, but did not graduate. He is a brilliant young writer of both prose and poetry (for his prose see the Introductory Note to "School Lets Out," p. 902). His best verse has been collected in *Youth Grows Old* (1922). The following poems from this volume illustrate the charming simplicity and refined esthetic quality of the poet's work. "At the Symphony" is a poetic interpretation of the celebrated "Symphony in D Minor" by César Franck, the distinguished French composer who died in 1890. The music brings before the poet's mind a seashore scene. The first effect of the music is to dispel the mood of tranquillity and raise an imaginary storm. The 'cellos represent the grumbling sounds of thunder as the storm approaches, the horns suggest the struggling ships driven before the fierce wind, and then, as the storm passes, the mellow single notes of the ebony wind instruments, clarinet and flute, bring back the calm tranquillity of the overhanging sky. "The Poet Sings to Himself" is a charming epigrammatic lyric which enumerates the essential elements of a poet's life.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How does the poet interpret César Franck's "Symphony in D Minor"? (2) In "The Poet Sings to Himself" what three things are mentioned as essentials of the poet's life? Why is sorrow the best of all? Memorize the poem.

At the Mermaid Cafeteria and **To a Post-Office Inkwell**
(Morley, p. 858)

INTRODUCTORY:

Christopher (Darlington) Morley (1890—) is humorist, essayist, novelist, critic, journalistic "colyumist," and poet. He was born in Haverford, Pennsylvania, and was educated at Haverford College and, after his graduation there in 1910, at New College, Oxford, England, where he was for three years a Rhodes Scholar. He went into journalistic work after his return to America, working with Doubleday Page & Co., *The Ladies Home Journal*, the *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, and the *New York Evening Post.* He is the author of a number of books of essays, many of which are shot through with rich veins of humor, several volumes of stories, and several of poetry. His *Where the Blue Begins* (1922) is a delightful story of a dog named Gissing, who is presented so much like a human being that one hardly realizes that one is reading about a dog. His recent novel, *Thunder on the Left* (1925), was classed as one of the notable books of the season, and some predict that it will take a permanent place in our literature. At present Morley is conducting a department in *The Saturday Review of Literature* under the caption of "The Bowling Green," a caption which he used and made notable while he was on the staff of the *New York Evening Post.* His best poetry has been collected from his several earlier volumes of verse in a book called *Chimneysmoke* (1921). "At the Mermaid Cafeteria" is an admirably phrased series of definitions and differentiations of prose, verse, and poetry. It will be well for the student to memorize this notable epigrammatic poem as a sort of guide in studying the three forms of writing mentioned in it. "To a Post-Office Inkwell" is a meditation on a commonplace and ugly object, but one made significant because of its intimate association with human life.

The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver (Millay, p. 859)

INTRODUCTORY:

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892—) (since 1923 Mrs. Eugen Jan Boissevain) was born at Rockland, Maine, and educated at Vassar

College, where she was granted the A. B. degree in 1917. In 1912, before entering Vassar, she published in *The Lyric Year* one of the most remarkable philosophical poems ever written by a young girl, "Renascence," a mystical revelation of profound beauty and insight. This poem with other shorter pieces was included in a volume in 1917, and *Second April* (1921), *A Few Figs from Thistles* (1921), and *The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems* (1923) contain her later poetry. She has also written several poetic dramas which have had successful production. In 1922 she was the winner of the Pulitzer prize for the best volume of poems for the preceding year. She is now being hailed as one of the chief poets of America. Miss Harriet Monroe in *Poetry* for August, 1924, names in the order of their appearance the women poets who have written in English—Emily Brontë, Mrs. Browning, Christina Rossetti, Emily Dickinson—and then places Edna St. Vincent Millay above them all.

The theme of the remarkably imaginative "Ballad of the Harp-Weaver" is the encompassing and protective power of mother love even after death has taken the weaver from the earthly scene. There is also in the ballad a suggestion that the poet or artist weaves permanent garments for those who are left after the artist has passed.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Who tells the story of the Harp-Weaver? (2) What does the boy's report of the mother's speech reveal? (3) Relate the story of the hard winter. (4) What miracle happened on the night before Christmas? (5) What to you is the real meaning of the ballad?

Euclid (Millay, p. 863)

INTRODUCTORY:

Miss Monroe says that the sonnet on Euclid is alone enough to insure Miss Millay immortality. It is certain that this is one of the most notable of a large number of sonnets which this young poet has written. Euclid (*circa* 300 B.C.) was a mathematician of Alexandria, Egypt, who made great advances in the study of geometry. Though he did not invent the science, he has been called the father of geometry; he made such a clear and beautiful exposition of geometry that his name has become a synonym of that subject in our course of study. He conceived lines, angles, surfaces, and solids in their pure mathematical relations in space. Miss Millay says that Euclid is the only one who has looked on absolute beauty. The opening line, "Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare," is repeated farther on in the sonnet with a slightly different cadence so as to throw the emphasis on *alone*, and thus give double force to the central theme of the poem.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Who was Euclid? (2) What is the central theme of the sonnet, and where is it stated and where repeated? (3) What conceptions of Euclid are referred to in lines 5 and 6? This idea of "nothing intricately drawn nowhere" is repeated in another form in line 8; geese may gabble and hiss, but heroes, like Euclid, escape "from dusty bondage into luminous air." (4) The sonnet is a perfect example of the Italian form. In the first eight lines the general theme of Euclid's perception of absolute beauty in the perfect mathematical relations of space is stated and developed; in the last six lines the application is

made by recalling the blinding moment when the vision of "light anatomized" first came to Euclid; and the whole theme of the sonnet is emphasized by comparing his complete success with the partial success of all others who attempt to visualize absolute beauty. Work out these points for yourself. Give also the rime scheme of the sonnet.

To a Tree In Bloom (Flanner, p. 864)

INTRODUCTORY:

Hildegarde Flanner (1899—) is one of the most promising of the younger women poets of the West. She was born in Indianapolis, attended the public schools in that city, and then studied at Sweet Briar Institute in Virginia, and later at the University of California at Berkeley. She has published three small volumes of poetry, *Young Girl* (1920), *This Morning* (1920), and *A Tree in Bloom* (1924), and a one-act play called *Mansions* (1920). The sonnet "To a Tree in Bloom," the title poem of her latest volume, commemorates a flowering tree of unusual beauty which she saw frequently and learned to love devotedly while she lived in Berkeley. The poem first appeared in *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse*, March, 1924.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What two qualities of the flowering tree does the poet stress in the octave? (2) What appropriate image is deduced from these two qualities (last six lines)? (3) Note the purity, directness, and naturalness of the language used in the entire poem. Is there a single halting line or awkward phrase? (4) For pure beauty and artistry compare this sonnet with the other sonnets found in this section of your text, and decide on the relative rank of this one in the group.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE EXPERIMENTERS

While the establishment of *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse* in 1912 offered enterprising young poets a medium of publication in which their experiments would be welcomed, it was not long before the experimenters drifted off into one or another of the three or four camps into which the New Poetry rapidly divided. Sandburg, Lindsay, Robinson, Frost, and Masters expressed, each in his own way, the life of the America they knew. Amy Lowell and John Gould Fletcher stood definitely for the principles of Imagism, and were joined by Hilda Doolittle, Richard Aldington, and a few other poets. Ezra Pound drew apart as an independent force, and he remains to this day a sort of isolated poetical pioneer highly esteemed by the extreme left wing or radical group. In 1916 a whole group of poets under the leadership of Alfred Kreymborg, started a new poetry magazine carrying the motto, "The old expressions are with us always, and there are always others," the last word of this motto being chosen as the title of the new publication. This was followed by a series of anthologies — *Others 1916—1917—1919*. In the pages of *Others* experimentation of any and all kinds was given free rein; and it was through these pages that many of the younger poets became known: Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot, Alfred Kreymborg, Marianne Moore, Emanuel Carnevali, Maxwell Bodenheim, Mina Loy, Lola Ridge, William Carlos Williams, and many more. Some of these had published poems in *Poetry* before *Others* appeared; but *Others* stood so definitely for experimentation and against the crystallization of poetic theories into hidebound dogmas that its contributors came to be known as members of the *Others* group.

Only a small part of the work of these experimenters can be illustrated here. Of those represented, Ezra Pound never definitely aligned himself with the group, nor with any special group, though he contributed a few poems to the *Others* anthologies; however, he is none the less experimental. E. E. Cummings and Mark Turbyfill were not represented in the *Others* anthologies because the annual suspended publication before their work began to appear. It is characteristic of all the poets here listed as experimenters that their work is highly individual; and that instead of following established forms they all sought or invented such forms as seemed to them to best express the things they had to say.

Apart from their experimental tendency and their association in *Others*, the Experimenters have very little in common. Ezra Pound is interested in Oriental and medieval theories of versification, and has experimented with applications of them in English. His vigorous personality is stamped on every line he has written, and while the forms he uses may be archaic or exotic, his spirit is pronouncedly modern. William Carlos Williams seeks elemental rhythms as vehicles for elemental material whose philosophic significance he attempts to give us. Maxwell Bodenheim utters cries of anguish through word-patterns reminiscent of the Euphuism of the age of Elizabeth. T. S. Eliot's voice is one of disillusionment; he is highly intellectual and endowed with a keen wit and a sharp ironic thrust; he satirizes life with the attitude of one to whom nothing matters any more. Wallace Stevens, on the other hand, while perhaps equally as profound as Eliot, is much more gay. He constantly philosophizes; but his meditations are expressed through sharply cut images and symbols which are frequently very opulent in their sensuous beauty. Where Eliot's humor is bitter, Stevens's is impertinent. Impertinence in a much milder form is found in the humor of Alfred Kreymborg; but Kreymborg also has elements of wistfulness and playfulness which are unique in contemporary American verse. Moreover he has a very pronounced melodic vein in most of his poems. Marianne Moore, by her unusual word-combinations, gives words new and sharper tone-values and more definite connotations. The content of her poems is almost exclusively comment of an extremely detached nature, but it is highly sophisticated and ironical comment, and therefore quite stimulating. Mark Turbyfill, on the other hand, is a poet of ecstasy. His poems are dominantly lyrical, even when the subject-matter is highly metaphysical. His rhythms are rhythms of the dance, or rather of the ballet; and his verses are shot through with dazzling and swiftly changing colors, in which the moods, the subject-matter, and the tones of the words are dexterously blended. E. E. Cummings is also primarily a lyrist, being but little concerned with philosophic material. He has rich, melodic rhythms and rimes, and draws almost photographically realistic pictures of life in its more colorful aspects. He brings to poetry much of the technique of modern painting; he makes one see as well as hear. All these poets are turning the current of present-day art into new and unexpected channels, and their experiments are worth watching. Although they seem to have come into prominence only yesterday, they have already made good their claim to an audience by producing poetry which no earnest and fair-minded student of literature can ignore.

Anecdote of Men by the Thousand and **Six Significant Landscapes** (Stevens, pp. 865–866)

INTRODUCTORY:

Wallace Stevens, (1879—), a lawyer of Hartford, Connecticut, seems to care little about revealing the facts of his career to a curious public. He has been writing strange, almost uncanny, and certainly, to the general public at least, somewhat puzzling poems since 1913 when he became a contributor to *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse.* He has since appeared several times in the *Others* anthologies and in various advanced poetry magazines, but it was not until 1923 that he overcame his reticence sufficiently to publish a collection of his poems in *Harmonium*, one of the most startling and provocative contributions to the radical poetry of our day. The artists, musicians, sculptors, and poets of the most advanced recent schools seem to tend more and more toward pure abstraction in their art products. The painters, for example, no longer try to paint an object as it appears in nature nor even to present it so the uninitiated can recognize the subject-matter treated, but rather to present the impression that the object makes on the artist, to realize in some suggestive and bizarre form the internal essence, the dynamic force, the spiritual message of the object, using a combination of harmonized or diametrically opposed colors, planes, and lines to effect their intentions or conceptions. If the subject of a picture, for example, is a cow, you look in vain to find any clear outline of the animal on the canvas. There are shadowy horns, a swish of a tail, a section of an udder, and a conglomerate mass of back and sides and legs, but no concrete image of a cow. The picture is merely an abstraction of the artist's conception of cow. (See the reproduction of Arthur Dove's picture "The Cow," in the *Dial* for December, 1921.) The advanced or radical poet uses words as the new painter uses forms and colors. He mixes and manipulates his syllables and words and phrases so as to make striking and pleasing combinations, but the reader is not always able to understand precisely what the poet is trying to say. The appeal is made directly to the emotions and the imagination, and only indirectly to the intellect. The painters call themselves Expressionists, Neo-Impressionists, Cubists, Futurists, Vorticists, Synchromists, and the like, and the poets are sometimes classified under the same rubrics. Wallace Stevens, along with many other moderns, has been attempting to do in poetry what the painters and musicians and sculptors have been doing in their respective arts. Most of Stevens's poems are wholly unintelligible to one trained to read poetry of the ordinary kind. Whether his work will ever be fully understood or appreciated by the general public is doubtful, but he seems to enjoy his own efforts to express the inexpressible, and he goes on steadily experimenting in these strange new forms and producing abnormal novelties in verse, no matter what the public thinks or says. Now and again, however, he writes a poem from which we can get a gleam of real light and a quiver of genuine pleasurable emotion. For example, his "Peter Quince at the Clavier," his most famous poem has been rated by several competent critics as one of the masterpieces of modern poetry. It is a philosophic poem written in charming lyrical stanzas and based on a mood aroused by hearing a piece of music played (imaginatively) on the ancient clavier. The poet introduces and comments on the legend of Susanna's naked beauty and its effects on the white-haired elders, but his main purpose is to define philosophically concrete beauty as presented in the perfect flesh of a lovely woman.

> Beauty is momentary in the mind—
> The fitful tracing of a portal;
> But in the flesh it is immortal.
> The body dies; the body's beauty lives.

This philosophic vein persists even in Stevens's most lyrical and expressionistic poems. He is constantly striving to rationalize the world according to his own transcendental philosophy. Take the opening sentence of "Anecdote of Men by the Thousand" given in our text. There is first a philosophic concept introduced abruptly—"The soul is composed of the external world"—and then the poet goes on to illustrate the concept by showing that men of any given place are that place. The external objects, the concrete things, are the spirit of the place. "Men by the thousand" represent their respective provinces. So with things: a mandoline is not the instrument of Western mountains or Northern moonlights. It belongs to southern climes. It speaks for, it suggests, the South; it is the South. So the dress of a woman of Lhassa is "an invisible element [spirit] of that place made visible." All this is but a poetic exposition of the philosophic concept set down in the opening lines. Similarly "Six Significant Landscapes" is fundamentally philosophic. The poet presents the landscapes in mood-pictures and leaves it to the reader to deduce for himself the philosophic ideas which are implicit in the poems. Each landscape is *significant* of some idea. The questions below will attempt to elucidate somewhat in detail these very subtle abstractions.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What philosophic concept is stated in the opening lines of 'Anecdote of Men by the Thousand"? (2) By what three parallel examples is this concept illustrated in lines 3 to 8? (3) Stevens frequently introduces exotic or bizarre and striking images in his poems. Here the chief exotic image is that of the toucans, strange South American birds with colored beaks almost as large as the bird's body. *Lhassa*, or Lassa, in Tibet, is a far-away place allusion, and *mandolines* suggests Southern Europe. How is each of the images made to illustrate the idea at the opening of this poem? Do you agree with the poet that concrete things are the soul? (4) Read over the first (I) of the "Six Significant Landscapes" and point out the three distinct images of objects moving in the wind. Where is the old man placed? What mood is induced by the image of the silent old man as he sits watching the moving objects? What is the poet actually looking at as this calm, contemplative mood-picture of rhythmic wind movement flashes on him (see the last two lines)? What philosophic concept do you deduce from the contrast of the wind movement and the water movement? (Consider the notion of the identity or solidarity of all nature in its various concrete forms. The rhythmic movement of weeds in flowing water suggests similar rhythmic movements of objects in the wind. All life is movement, no matter through what medium we view it.) (5) The next landscape (II) is a moonlight-night picture. In what image does the poet view the night? What image is suggested by the agitated waters of the pool in the moonlight? Is this subordinate image appropriate to the larger image? How is the identity or

kinship of man and nature suggested in this poem? (6) In the third landscape (III) we have a suggestion of the advantages and the limitations of man in comparison with nature. In the first seven lines we get the superior equipment of man, but by way of contrast in the last three lines we get a suggestion of man's limitations, for there is a whole world of sights and sounds which man's senses cannot compass, as for example, those sights and sounds to which the ant is responsive. Both the strength and the puniness of man is suggested by this poem. Give in your own words the elements of strength and weakness in man as suggested by the lines. (7) The next poem (IV) is expressive of the ecstasy which the poet feels in dealing with infinity. In his imaginative flights man transcends time and space. The poet here portrays a night scene in space. The white folds of the gown of the poet's dream become mingled with the yellow light of the sun, and the red glow of the nether fires light up the feet while the blue crystallizations of the near-by stars fill the hair of the mystic figure of the dream. Can you visualize this very beautiful and imaginative concept? (8) The fifth poem (V) brings us back to earth to contrast the artificial lights of a city with the brilliant beams of a star shining upon a cluster of grape leaves. Why does the poet compare the lamp-posts to knives, the streets to chisels, and the domes to mallets? Do you get the figure of a sculptor at work? What philosophic idea do you deduce from this poem? (Consider the inadequacy of man's efforts to secure beauty in sculptured forms with nature's success in creating beauty.) (9) The last poem (VI) is a plea for less rigidity and narrowness in art and philosophic thought. The theorists who attempt to classify all things in one definitive system, the artists who use only one set of forms, are hampered by their own limitations. Do you get the humor of the imagery employed? What two kinds of hats are used to symbolize the two forms of geometric figures of the main image? Are they appropriate to the imagery? (10) What do you get from your study of these poems by Stevens? Do you think they are worth while, or are they too subtle, vague, and abstract? Do you think this new kind of poetry may lead to greater artistic products in the near future?

Glances, Misterman Kreymborg, and **When the Willow Nods**
(Kreymborg, pp. 868-871)

INTRODUCTORY:

Alfred Kreymborg (1883—), who happens to be among the oldest of the modern radical or experimental poets, is the leading propagandist for the strange new poetical forms. He was born in New York City, the fifth offspring of Danish and German parents. He was educated in the public schools of his native city. At the age of ten he was an expert chess player, and later he supported himself for a time by teaching chess and playing exhibition games. He is also gifted in music, and he has used his musical talent to good effect in arranging on his odd instrument (the mandolute) accompaniments to his unusual lyrics. In 1916 he founded and edited the magazine *Others*, which ran for about three years and which was supplemented by three annual anthologies, under the same title. Kreymborg's own early poems were collected in a volume called *Mushrooms* (1916). There are many odd creations in this volume. The poet cut out unsparingly all unnecessary or merely decorative words and presented his poems in forms that are altogether unscannable by the old methods. Some of them are in such scant and bare outline as to be utterly meaningless to the uninitiated. His condensed phrases, odd cadences, and other eccentricities were a joy to his radical friends, a shining mark for the jocular critics, and a puzzle to the general public. But with it all there is often a pleasing whimsicality and playfulness, a deft touch of quaint humor, a charming wistfulness, and at times a deep note of gentleness and tenderness, and these qualities serve not only to save many of his poems from failure but to place them definitely within the compass of genuine art. Turning his attention to the puppet theater, Kreymborg brought out next his *Plays for Poem-Mimes* (1918), later called *Puppet Plays*. His other volumes of plays are *Plays for Merry Andrews* (1920), *Rocking Chairs and Other Comedies* (1921), and *There's a Moon Tonight* (1925), the last being a full-length comedy. The poet had a puppet theater made and equipped with especially designed marionettes, and in recent years he and his wife, Dorothy (Bloom) Kreymborg, have been giving with marked success readings and puppet shows throughout the country. Three other volumes of poems, *Blood of Things* (1920), *Less Lonely* (1923), and *Scarlet and Mellow* (1926) the first made up of fanciful, humorous, bizarre, and ironic poems in his early vein; the second of more serious and conventional poems, many of them in regular rimed stanzas and some in standard sonnet forms: and the third of rimed poems, sonnets, and a few free-verse forms — complete Kreymborg's contributions to our poetry up to the present time. His prose volume, *Troubadour* (1925), is a charming autobiography detailing his early life, his struggle for recognition in art, and his wanderings as he has gone about reading his poems and trying to establish himself as a new kind of artist in the busy commercial world into which he was born. The selections given here illustrate the whimsical verse forms, the playful irony, and the underlying vein of seriousness of this distinctly new poet.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What deeper undercurrent of emotion do you discover in "Glances"? What is it that *almost* saves the wanderer? Why is the word *almost* given a full line? (2) What peculiarities of Hermann Kreymborg are presented in the first part of the poet's portrait of his father? (3) What emotion is aroused as you read of the peculiar way in which the father chose a name for his fifth son? (4) What modern poets are mentioned as Alfred's friends? (All of them except Skipwith Cannell and Lance Hartpence are treated elsewhere in this book.) (5) How does "the offspring give birth to the father"? (6) Why is Edgar Lee Masters called "the poet of the dead"? (7) "When the Willow Nods" is used as the opening and closing stanza of the dance play under the same title (in *Puppet Plays*), the most poetical and beautiful of all Kreymborg's short plays. The little poem is fascinating in its exquisite rhythm and parallelism, and it also has a profound philosophical idea underlying its simple but charming form —namely, the unity and solidarity of the universe with the supreme Creator back of it all. Memorize these lovely lines.

Peace on Earth and **Overture to a Dance of Locomotives** (Williams, pp. 872-873)

INTRODUCTORY:

William Carlos Williams (1883—)began his career as a poet by contributing to the first radical anthologies, samples of his work appearing in *Des Imagistes* (1914) and in the *Others* anthologies, and he has since gone on his own way, creating those strange and subtle poems for which he is notable. He was born in Rutherford, New Jersey, of an English father and a Porto Rican mother. He attended the Horace Mann School in New York and afterward studied in Geneva, Switzerland. Then he entered the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania and graduated in 1906, returning to Rutherford to practise his profession. His first volume of poems was the diminutive *The Tempers*, published in England in 1913. Other volumes of his are *Al Que Quiere* (1917), *Kora in Hell* (1921), *Sour Grapes* (1922), and *Spring and All* (1923). In 1926 he was awarded the *Dial* prize of $2000. His work is very difficult to read, and some have accused him of being a mere poetic quack or charlatan; but he belongs to the extremely modern school of art and is generally classed as an expressionist (see the note on Maxwell Bodenheim, p. 983), and as such he does not always give us the object he is writing about but merely the effect that that object makes on the poet. Hence we are not always expected to understand his lines, but rather to interpret them as the resultant effects on the poet. In some of his poems, however, we can easily get the very powerful imaginative effects of his mind and enjoy the resulting exaltation. For example in "Peace on Earth" we experience a sense of awe and delight at the beautiful hunting pageant of the wheeling stars at night while the world goes on peacefully sleeping. And in "Overture to a Dance of Locomotives" we are impressed with the tremendous rush and roar of a huge cosmopolitan railroad station. We hear the stentorian tones of the announcer of trains echoing through the building; we see the passengers rushing to and fro; we watch the hands of the time indicators revolve; we see a ray of sunlight play across the inclosure. Then the trains at "two, twofour, twoeight" are almost ready for departure. The redcaps lead the passengers hurriedly to their coaches (described as "the dingy cylinders packed with a warm glow"), the brakes are loosened at the sound of the whistle, and at two the first train moves, the windows glide by, the cooks sweat in the kitchen of the diner, and tail-lights are lit to prevent collision as the trains move out to tunnel the river. The "twofour" and the "twoeight" trains follow quickly. The wheels move always on the parallel rails, and the dance of the locomotives begins in earnest.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) In "Peace on Earth" what constellations are mentioned in each of the three stanzas? Can you locate these constellations in the heavens? (2) What lines are several times repeated in the three stanzas, and what is the effect of this device? (3) Do you get the glorious picture of the hunting (revolving) stars at night? (4) Why is the poem called "Peace on Earth"? (5) Give the impressionistic picture of the great railroad station as the trains prepare to depart (see the Introductory Note on "Overture to a Dance of Locomotives"). Why is

the poem called "Overture"? (6) How do you like this utterly new kind of a poem? (7) Read it over until you can visualize and synthesize the whole impressionistic picture.

Revolt, Chi É Questa?, Piccadilly, and **An Immortality**
(Pound, pp. 875-877)

INTRODUCTORY:

Ezra (Loomis) Pound (1885—) is a sort of inspired prophet and leader in many forms of modern art. He began with organizing the early Imagists in 1913, but soon left them and advanced into more radical phases and movements of modern poetry. He became an expressionist, a vorticist, a cerebralist, a futurist, and whatever other *-ist* was the most advanced fad of the moment. Recently (1925) when *This Quarter*, an illustrated exponent of ultra modern forms of art edited by Ernest Walsh and Ethel Moorhead, was founded, the first number was dedicated to Ezra Pound, "who by his creative work, his editorship of several magazines, his helpful friendship for young and unknown artists, his many and untiring efforts to win better appreciation of what is first-rate in art comes first to our mind as meriting the gratitude of this generation." He is familiarly and affectionately called "Ezra" by the young artists and poets, many of whom are eager to acknowledge their personal indebtedness to him. Pound will perhaps never become a popular or even a semi-popular poet, but undoubtedly when the history of early twentieth century art comes to be finally and authoritatively written the influence of his powerful personality will be given due emphasis. He was born at Hailey, Idaho, and educated at Hamilton College and the University of Pennsylvania. In 1908 he went to Spain in search of material for his dissertation, and from Spain he went on to Venice, and from there to London, and finally on to Paris, at each of which places he made his residence for some time, Paris being his present resting place, though he claims London as his permanent address. His first book, *Lume Spento* (1908), was published in Venice, and his second, third, and fourth volumes, *Personæ* (1909), *Exultations* (1909), and *Canzoni* (1911), in London. *Provença* (1911), the first of his books to be published in America, contains the best of the poems in his previous volumes. Pound early learned to despise what he esteemed as the dull commonplaceness and sugary sentimentality of the nineteenth-century poetry, and he sought relief by creating distinctly new forms and by reverting to earlier primitive types of art, such as those of ancient Greece and Rome, medieval Italy and France, and more recently ancient China and Japan. He is a most difficult poet to read, for he usually pares his lines down to the barest outlines, trusting the reader to fill in the skeleton forms by supplying the missing tissues and decorations; and he constantly resorts to dark symbols, and mystical and occult allusions, and broken gestures of ironic effect. But there are profound pathos and a surging power of imagination in many of his poems, and the fresh, new accent that he gives to old words makes him a real poet. His large output of verse, both original and translated, contains much that Time will undoubtedly cast on the rubbish heap, but there will be enough left to furnish forth a poet of power and distinction. The selections given here illustrate his simpler forms and his more easily intelligible themes. "Revolt" shows his antagonism to the sentimental and dreamy romanticism of the Victorian period, and at the same time expresses the creed and battle-cry of the new poets of today. Written before the artistic revolt of 1912, this poem is historically significant as foreshadowing the spirit of the new poetry. The title of the second poem is in Italian and means "Who Is She?" It is typical of Pound's work that he not only creates and exploits new forms, but that he now and then deliberately uses traditional forms to show what can still be done with them. This sonnet is an excellent example of his use of a classical form as a medium for modern emotion and thought. Notice how the strong personality of the poet surcharges the entire poem. The lover finally gives up in despair when he tries to define the mystery of love. In the third poem, "Piccadilly" we have an example of the profound pathos of the poet as he thinks of "the wistful, fragile faces" in the coarse mass of sodden and drunken humanity in the famous London street called Piccadilly. "An Immortality," exalts love as the chief thing in life.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the meaning of the word *crepuscular* in the title of the first poem? (2) Is this poem a prayer or a protest? (3) What is the force of the question mark placed outside of the quotation in line 4? In what sense is it better to dream than do? In what sense is it better to do than dream? (4) What ringing appeal is made to the modern poets or dreamers? (5) Select some of the most forceful lines in the poem and tell why you like them. (6) Can you name some earlier poets against whom this poem may be directed? (7) What is the theme of "Chi É Questa"? If it is a love poem, what is the lover's conclusion as to expressing the meaning of love? (8) In what form is the sonnet written, English or Italian? Why do you suppose the poet preferred this form? Does the title give you a hint? (9) What is it that moves the poet as he looks on the sordid, broken mass of humanity in "Piccadilly"? (10) In what form is this poem written? Compare the form used here with that used in "Revolt." (11) In "An Immortality" what does the poet exalt as the chief thing in life? Do you agree that this is the only way by which men may achieve immortality? (12) Which of these four poems do you like best, and why? (13) Compare with these poems Pound's condensed, flashlight imagistic poem given in the note on the Imagists, p. 947.

Silence and **To Be Liked by You Would Be a Calamity** (Moore, p. 878)

INTRODUCTORY:

Marianne Moore (1887—) was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and educated at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, from which famous woman's college she graduated in 1909. She taught stenography two years or more and then became an assistant in one of the branch public libraries of New York City. Recently she has taken up the duties of active editor of the *Dial*, a magazine notable for its encouragement of and predilection for the more advanced forms of modern literature. About 1915 Miss Moore began contributing her keenly intellectual and strikingly new poetic forms of verse to an advanced English journal called *The Egoist*, and in 1921 a few of her *Poems* were collected by her friends "H. D." and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Macalmon and published by the Egoist Press without the author's supervision. In 1924 Miss Moore was awarded the *Dial* prize of $2000 for the most distinctive contribution to American literature for that year. At this time she collected and published *Observations*, which contained her complete poems with her own annotations. Her peculiar manner of arranging her lines so as to bring out unobtrusive rimes and subtle assonances, her habit of quoting obscure but suggestive phrases from unexpected sources, her highly sophisticated comment on life, all give to her work a piquant and pungent intellectuality that is perhaps unmatched in modern poetry. So subdued and indistinct are her accents, so subtle are her nuances, or suggestive shades of tone, that some have been led to assert that her verse is nothing more than highly sophisticated prose comment; but the sharpness of her wit, the hardness of her surfaces, the vividness of her imagery, the concentrated power of her mind, the refined delicacy of her emotion, and the probing incisiveness of her satire give flashes of real beauty to her compositions. And if she desires to call her carefully evolved and skilfully articulated comment poetry, who will dare to deny her right to do so in these days when the line of demarcation between poetry and prose is no longer clearly discernible? Much of Miss Moore's work is beyond the comprehension of even the most astute adult readers. She is one of the most scholarly, the most widely read, and the most resourceful of present-day writers. Her mind is as keen as a rapier and as swift as a flash of light. Any one who can read her book through and claim to comprehend it thoroughly may safely claim to be a marvel of intellectual acumen. The present editor frankly confesses that he is completely baffled by many of the poems in *Observations*. A few of the simpler ones, however, may be read understandingly even by young students. In fact, we are beginning to discover that the younger generation responds very much more readily to the artistic productions of these more advanced poets than do adult and middle-aged readers who were trained in the older poetic technique.

"Silence" and "To Be Liked by You Would Be a Calamity" illustrate Miss Moore's keen intellectuality, subtle and sophisticated irony, and skilful appropriation of quotation from varied sources. "Silence" is an ironic treatment of tiresome, lingering visitors. Miss Moore gives in a note on this poem the source of her quotations. She informs us that she got the first of the two quotations from a private conversation with Miss A. M. Holmans, Professor Emeritus of Hygiene, Wellesley College. Professor Holmans remarked: "My father used to say, 'superior people never make long visits; then people are not so glad when you've gone.' When I am visiting, I like to go about by myself. I never had to be shown Longfellow's grave nor the glass flowers at Harvard." On these remarks the poem is built. Notice how the poet has elaborated the idea and illustrated it by the homely but effective image of the wise cat who takes his mouse to privacy to enjoy a feast. One of the freshest and most vivid images in all modern poetry is "the mouse's limp tail hanging like a shoelace from its [the cat's] mouth." Another quotation, this time a remark of Edmund Burke's made to a casual acquaintance in a bookshop, "Make my house your inn," concludes and clinches the point of the poem. One does not make himself too familiar in an inn, and one does not stay too long at an inn, for "inns are not residences." In "To Be Liked by You Would Be a Calamity" the opening quotation is from Thomas Hardy, as Miss Moore herself informs us in a note on this poem. "Attack is more piquant than concord"; true, but when attack goes so far as to threaten annihilation there can be no pleasant or profitable argument. Imagine a coarse and over-bearing opponent, one who has no sense of the value of words, arguing with a sensitive and refined person. The only thing the sensitive person can do is to resort to the sharp weapon of gesticulation and haughtily bow the opponent out.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What is the theme of "Silence"? Would you say that this poem teaches one the proper manners for making a visitation? (2) What two show places of Cambridge are mentioned as devices for entertaining boring and lingering visitors? (3) What vivid image is resorted to to illustrate the point that a wise visitor should seek the privacy of his assigned room and not bore the family too long with his presence? Have you ever seen a mouse's tail hanging from a cat's mouth? (4) What is the meaning of "robbed of speech by speech which has delighted"? (5) What reservation is implied when one gives the invitation "Make my house your inn"? (6) Now that you have studied the poem closely, read it aloud and try to bring out the ironic nuances and the subtle suggestiveness of the lines. (7) Now examine the second poem. Why is "Attack more piquant than concord"? If attack in the sense of difference of opinion becomes too virulent or vindictive, what is one's best resource? (8) Why is gesticulation defined as "half the language"? Under what figure is gesticulation presented (see the noun in line 4 and the adjective and the nouns in line 7)? (9) Interpret the word *courtesy* (line 8) ironically. How is the difference between the coarse and sensitive person expressed in lines 9 and 10? (10) Study the form of this poem. Notice that the words *feel-feet-out* in lines 2, 3, and 5 are answered in rime by *steel-meet-shout* in lines 7, 8, and 10. The poem is quite new in both pattern and thought, and its novelty gives it peculiar piquancy and attractiveness. (11) How do you like the subtle and highly sophisticated quality of Miss Moore's poems?

Rhapsody on a Windy Night, Preludes, and **Cousin Nancy**

(Eliot, pp. 879–883)

INTRODUCTORY:

T. S. Eliot (1888—) is the third recent poet represented in this volume who was born in St. Louis, Missouri, the other two being Sara Teasdale and Marianne Moore. He always signs his name by his initials only, though he was christened Thomas Stearns Eliot at his birth. He took both the A. B. (1909) and the A. M. (1910) degrees at Harvard, and then went to do further study at Merton College, Oxford, England, and at the Sarbonne in France. He taught classes and lectured in London for a time, and then went into journalistic work, being attached to several forward-looking magazines, such as *The Egoist* and *The Criterion.* Of the last-named, which is a quarterly devoted to literary and other artistic interests, he was one of the founders and is at present the editor. He has lived in London since 1914, but he still looks upon himself as an American exiled, like Ezra Pound and others, to Europe. Eliot is regarded as one of the keenest critics and most learned literary men of our times. In addition to his *Poems* (1920), which contains his early work, he has published *Waste Land* (1922), a long and difficult poem which won the *Dial* prize as the most distinguished contribution to American literature for the year, and two volumes of literary essays, *The Sacred Wood* (1921) and *Homage to John Dryden* (1924). His scholarly instincts take him back to the giant minds of the past, the intensely intellectual poets like John Donne, Andrew Marvel, and John Dryden. His criticism of these writers is stimulating and illuminating. Like John Donne particularly, Eliot himself writes highly sophisticated and superbly ironical verse. As stated above in the General Introductory Note to the Experimenters, the chief note of Eliot's poetry is that of disillusionment. He has long lived in a tensely intellectual atmosphere, and with his own sharp intellect he sees many things in modern civilization which attract his stinging satire and merciless irony. He writes largely in a sort of free verse with irregularly interspersed rimes, though he also writes in the regular conventional forms, the quatrain in particular, which form he uses with startlingly new and amusing effects, as, for example, in his notoriously ironic poem, "Sweeny Among the Nightingales." Other widely discussed and occasionally imitated poems of his are "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "The Portrait of a Lady," and "Waste Land."

We have chosen here three of the less sophisticated and hence somewhat easier poems from this writer, though the young reader will doubtless find even these tough enough to test his best ability in interpretation. The selections illustrate admirably the hard irony and the severely accurate realism of this modern critic of life. The student will find in them a note of disillusionment, an undertone of ennui, an expression of the futility and emptiness of all effort to be entirely happy, in fact, something of the boring, deadening, humdrum drabness of modern city life. Realism of the most accurate kind is here mingled with somewhat pessimistic comment on the meaning of existence. The questions below will help the student to grasp the intention of the poet. "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" records the memories of a tired, *blasé* city dweller as he passes the sputtering street-lamps on his way home in the post-midnight hours of a clear, windy night. The poet records with stark realism specific images that appeal to the man as he passes each lamp-post, and these call up a horde of remembered images out of his past experience. The crooked eye of a woman suggests a number of twisted things; a cat eating a piece of rancid butter calls up similar odd images; the moon brings reminiscences of dry and dusty things and old remembered odors; at four o'clock the night wanderer finds his room and goes to bed to snatch a few hours of sleep in preparation for the grind of the next day. The last line emphasizes the drabness and dullness of the eternal grind of the work-a-day world — "the last twist of the knife" being the agonizing thought of the deadening humdrum of the hard world to which he must return on the morrow. "Preludes" is a series of realistic city pictures. The first is an etching of a winter evening at six o'clock; the second is an early morning picture emphasizing the stale odors of the coffee-stands; the third presents an early morning portrait of a woman in bed recalling the sordid images of the previous night's revelries; the fourth is a night picture of a man trying to fathom the mysteries of life, though there is little use trying to understand the jostling masses of workmen that throng the streets from four to six o'clock in the afternoon. One can only wipe his hand over his mouth and laugh, while the celestial worlds go on revolving like a crowd of old women gathering faggots in vacant lots. The note of irony persists in each of the four Preludes, thus unifying the mood of the whole poem. "Cousin Nancy," in a lighter vein, is a poem picturing a modern girl and the impression she makes on her old-fashioned aunts. The references to Matthew and Waldo are to Matthew Arnold and Ralph Waldo Emerson, two powerful interpreters and critics of life during the Victorian era; to these authorities, no doubt, the aunts often referred in their doubts about the conduct of Miss Nancy.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) How is the passage of time indicated in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night"? (2) What is the effect of making the street-lamps talk? (3) What does the first lamp show the wanderer, and what memories are called up by the image? (4) What does the next lamp show at half-past two, and what memories does this new image call forth? (5) What story does the third lamp tell at half-past three? What sense is particularly appealed to in this section? (6) In this division of the poem the author introduces a jingling French proverb which means "The moon never holds a grudge." Reproduce the description of the moon as given here. (7) At what hour does the man reach home? (8) What is the ironic implication in the last line of the poem? (9) Study the form in which the poem is cast. Notice the placing of the rimes, most of them more or less unemphatic and widely separated, as in the first stanza — *incantations* . . . . *relations*, *drum* . . . . *geranium*. Occasionally the rimes are made more emphatic by repetition and juxtaposition,, as in the case of *sputtered*. . . . *muttered*. (10) Note the extreme compression of the style and the consequent vivid effects of the images presented. The poet constantly translates what he sees into abstract symbols of memories of the past, and thus the mood of the poem is built up.. Point out examples of this device. (11) Give the picture presented in each of the four "Preludes." (12) Work out the time scheme in "Preludes" and compare it with the time scheme of "Rhapsody on a Windy Night." (13) Is rime more frequent in the "Preludes" than in the "Rhapsody"? How do you like this new method of handling rimes? (14) "Cousin Nancy" is an unrimed poem in three movements. What things did this modern young lady do that shocked her aunts? (15) What authorities rested on the book shelves, apparently unconsulted by Miss Nancy? (16) Why is the piece called "Cousin Nancy"? (Perhaps the girl is an imaginary cousin of the author of the lines.)

Two Sonnets To My Wife (Bodenheim, p. 884)

INTRODUCTORY:

Maxwell Bodenheim (1893—) was born in Hermanville, Mississippi, attended the grammar school in Natchez, and, as soon as he was old enough to be accepted, enlisted in the United States army for a period of three years. Upon his discharge in 1913, he studied law and art in Chicago for a short time, but he was so entranced with the new poetry sponsored by *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse* and the volumes of *Some Imagist Poets* and *Others*, that he decided to devote his talents to literature. He is possessed of a remarkably keen mind for the fantastic and bizarre, and he has a profound tendency toward ironic and sardonic phrases of thought. He has been classed by Louis Untermeyer as an Expressionist. This critic's exposition of Impressionism and Expressionism in his recent volume, *American Poetry Since 1900* (1924), is enlightening as an approach to Bodenheim's poetry: "Although definitions are treacherous, one might say that the difference between impressionism and expressionism is the difference between life in repose and thought in action. Impressionism gives us the object colored by the artist's temperament, heightened by his mood or thrown out of focus by the vividness of its impact—but the object remains itself. Expressionism considers the object only to express its inner quality; the expressionist will use reality or depart from it without preparing his audience. He will leap from representation to abstraction, if by so doing he can achieve either a fresh intensity and motion, or record, by arbitrary symbols, what the realist would have considered inexpressible. The expressionists never wish to make an imitation of an object, they aim to record the sensation that the object arouses in them. Impressionism, one might say, is the scene or the emotion interpreted by the artist; expressionism is the artist interpreted by the scene." Bodenheim has passed through a hardening life experience, and he is extremely touchous and fiery in temperament. He vigorously defends the more advanced and radical forms of art and attacks with the utmost scorn the prettiness and soft sentimentality of the older conventional verse. And yet in his calmer moods, he himself writes sonnets and lyrics which are not widely different from the works of the very poets whom he castigates. His published volumes are *Minna and Myself* (1918), *Advice* (1920), *Introducing Irony* (1922). He is sometimes difficult to understand, for he often mixes his words and metaphors in a swift and incongruous manner. The two sonnets given here illustrate his more temperate style.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) Schönberg, the greatest living Austrian composer, is one of the ultra modern musicians who use dissonances and discords and new harmonies and progressions for startling musical effects. How does the poet apply this musician's work to his wife's singing in the first sonnet? (2) What similar idea is developed in the second sonnet? (3) Do you find these sonnets easy reading? Con them over slowly and carefully until you grasp their full meaning.

Pulse of Spring, Chicago, and **To the Tallest Spray**

(Turbyfill, pp. 885-886)

INTRODUCTORY:

Mark Turbyfill (1896—) was born at Wynnewood, Oklahoma (then Indian Territory), and educated in the public schools of Oklahoma City and the Lake View High School of Chicago. He enlisted and served for a period of seven months in the World War. He now lives in Chicago and is by profession a dancer. He has published *The Living Frieze* (1921) and (with Samuel Putnam) *Evaporation* (1923). He has several times contributed delicate and refined lyrics to *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse;* and in May, 1926, his long philosophic poem "A Marriage with Space" filled all the pages devoted to poetry in that number of the magazine. His poetry is so distinctly novel and so definitely individual that we have included him here with the other Experimenters. His poems are reminiscent of the varying colors and rhythms of the ballet and other forms of esthetic dancing. He has an extremely sensitive ear for music and a delicately responsive eye for the rhythms of the dance, and he transmits to his verse his reactions from these two arts when he writes poetry. The two poems given here illustrate his keen response to the things of beauty around him. He does not look for the sordid or ugly. He sees only the beautiful.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) What three beautiful images of coming spring are presented in "Pulse of Spring"? Visualize each one of these images as clearly as you can. (2) How is the poet affected by these lovely evidences of spring? In what line does he imply the intensity of his emotional response? Do you feel a like response as you visualize the things of beauty presented by the poet? (3) Turbyfill's "Chicago" is evidently an answer to another poem on this city, a poem which you will find elsewhere in the present volume. Look this poem up and read the two together for purposes of comparison. Which of the two poems do you think most aptly characterizes the city? Which would you prefer to have written? Could both points of view be true? If you ever visit Chicago, recall the pictures presented in the two poems and try to verify each image as nearly as you can. (4) Does Sandburg always write as he does in his poem "Chicago" (p. 803)? Compare some of his more delicate work in our text with Turbyfill's poems as given here. (5) Have you frequently noticed in a wheat field a single stalk rising above the mass of grain around it? Why does this single spray attract the attention of the poet-dancer? (6) *Zephire-step* is the technical name of a dance-step suggestive of the movements caused by a soft breeze or zephyr. Is this step appropriate here? (7) What is it that makes the poet desire to pluck the lovely spray?

Chanson Innocente I and **II, Orientale I, Song I, This Is the Garden, Froissart,** and **Of Nicolette** (Cummings, pp. 887-891)

INTRODUCTORY:

Certainly the most daring and radical, and perhaps the most richly endowed with genius, among the later poets of our time is Edward Estlin Cummings (1894—). The son of a Unitarian minister of Cambridge, Massachusetts, he grew up in a strongly intellectual and artistic atmosphere in the city of his birth. He attended Harvard University, majored in Greek, and won the A. B. degree in 1915. He then took a year of post-graduate study, majoring in English, and was granted the A. M. degree in 1916. America had not yet entered the World War, but young Cummings went across with one of his friends and volunteered for service in the Norton Harjes Ambulance Corps. His friend fell under suspicion because of certain indiscreet passages in his letters to America, and he and Cummings were arrested and thrown into a camp for suspects, a sort of "detention pen" at La Ferté-Macé, the only charge against Cummings being that he was intimately associated with the young man who wrote the letters. With nearly fourscore strange specimens of humanity the two Americans were held for about three months in the unspeakable filth of an "enormous room," but in spite of its hardships they seemed to enjoy the strange new life they lived there. After he was released, Cummings returned to America to recuperate from the privations and physical strain of his imprisonment, and presently he found himself drafted and ordered off to a training camp to be prepared for shipment to France as an American doughboy, a fate which he escaped only by the signing of the armistice and the cessation of the war. Since the war he has lived in New York City, devoting himself to the twin arts of painting and poetry. His first book was *The Enormous Room* (1922), an account of his experiences in the prison camp in France. It is written in prose, but in reality it is an artist's portfolio of character sketches done in highly imaginative, pungently pictorial style, so that it is almost poetry in spite of its prose form. It is, in fact, one of the most vividly alive books that have yet come out of the World War and is plainly a work of genius. In 1923 came *Tulips and Chimneys*, Cummings' first volume of avowed poetry. Here was a book to startle the conservative world by its radical and unconventional verse forms, its novel patterns, its strange new mintages and odd combinations of word forms, and its extravagant variation from ordinary rules of punctuation, capitalization, and word spacing. But it was also a poet-painter's book of rich metaphors, brilliant pictures, grotesque gestures, and imaginative power and insight. Three other volumes have already followed in the same style, *XLI Poems* (1925), & (1926), and *Is 5* (1926), the bizarre titles being interpreted as follows: There are forty-one (XLI) poems in this volume; & is the *ampersand* (look up this word in your dictionary) and suggests that more poems are to follow; and *Is 5* means that this is the fifth of Cummings' books. The last may also mean that twice two *is five*, a result which could only be obtained in the imaginative world of the new art. In 1925 Cummings was honored by the award of the $2000 *Dial* prize for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for the year.

Young Cummings is a man of remarkable vitality. He himself says, "Before all a man is alive or not alive; if intensely alive, one may be an artist." Certainly this young artist is intensely alive, and the public is beginning to realize that he is a real artist, one of those strange, anomalous beings that appear now and again on the earth, not to be thoroughly analyzed or understood but to be frankly accepted and catalogued under the mysterious title of genius. He is a scholar as well as an artist. He has read widely, and seems to have the Macaulay faculty of remembering everything he reads; yet the evidence in his work plainly shows that he has absorbed rather than imitated other books. Being endowed by nature with the artistic instinct, he had to find some avenue of artistic expression. He has drawn, he says, ever since he could hold a pencil in his hand, and he seems to be restless unless he is holding either a pencil or a pen. He was utterly miserable in the French prison, for example, until his guards supplied him with pencils and paper to sketch the marvelous life about him. You will discover as you read his poems that he has brought much of the technique of the painter into his work. In fact, he is always drawing lively pictures either in lines, shades, and colors, or in words to represent these. In both his paintings and poems Cummings is one of the advanced new artists who depend on a direct appeal to the esthetic sense, often without satisfying the intellect. They aim to stir the emotional nature and the imagination without offering the mind recognizable subject-matter for thought. So it comes about that we are not expected always to *understand* the new poetry when we read it. The reader must simply yield himself to the poet's mood, to the beauty inherent in the word combinations, the picturesque metaphors, and the entrancing cadences, and thus experience a rich esthetic pleasure whether he fully understands the words or not. You will find that an advanced poet like Cummings mixes and fuses his words as an artist mixes and blends his colors. He demands the artist's privilege of discarding fixed conventions, such as using a capital for the first word of every line of poetry or for a proper noun; the ordinary spacing; formal or regular arrangements of the lines, and so forth. He undertakes to arrange his words, dispose his capitals, and manipulate his punctuations and spacing to suit his own purposes. He never uses a capital, for example, unless he wants to throw special emphasis on a given word or sound, and hence a capital is as likely to appear in the middle or at the end of a word as at the beginning. He uses the small *i* for the pronoun *I* unless the pronoun is to be emphasized. Similarly with conventional punctuation marks. He omits punctuation where we expect it and puts it in where we do not expect it; in fact, he devises a system of his own to bring out the grouping of his phrases and the novel cadences of his verse. He telescopes or divides words to suggest the subtle effects of oral speech. For example, he runs "eddieandbill" and "bettyandisbel" together just as we would pronounce the playmates' names in rapid conversation. Sometimes, if it suits his purpose, he breaks words into separate particles, giving each syllable, or even a single letter, a whole line of verse. This is his method of indicating emphasis and slow or prolonged enunciation. In other words, he claims the right as a creative artist to discard conventions and handle his medium as a master, not as a servant of fixed conventions. This is a dangerous precedent for young persons, of course, for before one can presume to become an originator of new forms one must be an acknowledged master of the conventionally correct forms.

The poems given in this book are by no means the most radical which this poet has written, but they will give the reader a good idea of his peculiar patterns. We have chosen two charming child poems, in which form Cummings is a master; one passionate oriental love song; one impressionistic song celebrating in a very peculiar form a beautiful sunset scene; two of his more regular sonnets; and "Of Nicolette," a lovely vision in white, a lyric which must inevitably be rated as one of the most perfect ever written in America. The notes which follow will help the young reader to appreciate more fully these remarkable examples of the new poetry.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES:

(1) The first child poem, "Chanson Innocente I," presents the ecstasy of a child at the prospect of securing a colored balloon. It is a spring song, for this is the season when the balloon-man appears with his wares in the northern cities. The games are spring games, the world is "puddle-wonderful" from the snows and April rains, and the little children are on the *qui vive* for the coming of the picturesque vender with his brilliant wares bobbing in a great vari-colored bouquet over his head. Note how all this is suggested in the poem. (2) Read the

poem by lines, pausing slightly at each space extension within the line and at the end of each line. Read the poem over until you can bring out the childlike emotion which it crystallizes for us. Imagine yourself a four-year-old child as you read. (3) Now turn to "Chanson Innocente II," which catches another child mood, that of the Christmas season. Note how innocently the child talks to the Christmas tree and how charmingly imaginative are his ideas of dressing the tree to make it beautiful. Do you think the poet successfully captures the child's mood and point of view? (4) Compare these two child poems with the child poems of Eugene Field (see *Selections from American Literature*, pp. 477–480) and of Robert Louis Stevenson in *A Child's Garden of Verses.* Which of these poets expresses the child's point of view best? Which is most poetic or artistic? (5) In "Orientale I" notice the extreme simplicity of language and the perfect irregular regularity, if we may use such a term, of the verse form. When you get the form of the first stanza fixed in your mind, you will have little difficulty in reading the others, for they are exactly in the same pattern, though the cadence (length of lines) constantly varies. Note, however, that the tense of the verb is changed from past to present in the last stanza. What is the significance of this? Do you think that since the lover has been unable to move his mistress by *a smile, a song, a soul,* he has at last resorted to *a sword* and killed her? (6) Study out the delicate and suggestive figures in the four stanzas. For example, try to determine why the girl's mouth is called "a chord of crimson music" in the first stanza. Study the metaphors in the succeeding stanzas in the same way, and comment on the appropriateness and the imaginative beauty of each one. (7) Note how the cadences of the first four lines of each stanza vary and how the refrain falls into a repeated formal arrangement in each stanza. Read the poem aloud so as to bring out this variety of cadence. With a little practice you will be able to make the slight pauses where the lines are broken off, and you will note a very decided improvement in the oral effects of the poem. (8) "Song I" (page 890) is a poet-painter's conception of the brilliant coloring of an evening sky just at sunset. The syllables of the words are scattered over the page like the variegated colors of the sunset sky. The picture conceived is that of a dish of vari-colored candies, while beneath this "candy" sky is a grim locomotive spouting a column of dark blue smoke. The syllables of the last words are spaced so as to suggest the sound of the engine and finally strung out to suggest the column of dark-blue smoke. Read the first movement with a lively sense of the candy-like colors of the clouds; and then read the second movement in explosive sounds imitative of the chugging of the locomotive. (9) You will find much melody and beauty in this bizarre poem as you study it and read it aloud. For example, note the rimes, *sky-spry-shy-vi* and *lo-co-mo-o*, and the near-rimes *lu-ble* and *olates-olets.* Note also examples of alliteration, as *s*ky, *s*pry, *s*hy; *l*emons, coo *l*, *l*ates, *l*o, *l*ets. Read the poem over until you can bring out the full value of the pauses and sound effects. Do you like the puzzling qualities of this poem? Can you visualize the beautiful picture presented? (10) As you read "This Is the Garden," imagine you are looking on a brilliant display of flowers at twilight. Notice the pictorial and color effects such as only an artist can fully appreciate. (11) What image comes to your mind from such phrases as "*pursed lips* do blow upon *cool flutes*" and "some *silver-fingered* fountain *steals the world*"? (12) Note how the form of this sonnet is emphasized by the repetition of the phrase "This is the garden" at the beginning of each of the two quatrains in the octet (lines 1 and 5) and at the beginning of the sestet (line 9). Why is the capital *T* used in the fifth and ninth lines and not in the first line? Why is the capital *T* used in the twelfth line? To what does "They" refer? (13) Do you appreciate the marvelous beauty and suggestive power of the words and images in this sonnet? (14) What is the chief idea in the sonnet on Froissart? Have you ever debated the trite old question "Which is greater, the pen or the sword"? How does the poet answer this question in the sonnet? (15) Who was Froissart? Make a brief oral report after you have found out all you can about him. (16) Compare this sonnet with the preceding one and decide which of the two you like better. (17) Work out the rime scheme and say whether the sonnets are English or Italian in form. (18) "Of Nicolette" is a study in white written in a regular eight-line stanza riming *abccbdda*. The sequence of the four stanzas may be outlined as follows: (*a*) The castle on a moonlight night in May presented as a ghost-flower; (*b*) Nicolette, touched by love, (*c*) glides forth from a window of the castle, and (*d*) escapes through the garden to go in search of her lover. Work out this outline point by point, doing your best to visualize the whole magnificent conception of white loveliness. (19) In the first stanza the white marble castle is described as "a gigantic *ghost*-flower born of night, blossoming in *white* towers to the *moon*" and *phantom-white* trees as dropping their glorious *snows* (that is, *white* blossoms). Go through the other stanzas similarly, noting particularly the number of times images suggesting whiteness are used. (20) Compare this poem with the best lyrics you know in English, such as Poe's "To Helen" (page 403 of *Selections from American Literature*), Lanier's "The Marshes of Glynn" (page 422 of *Selections*), Keats's "Ode to the Nightingale," and others, and determine just how well "Of Nicolette" bears the comparison. The theme of the poem is drawn from the old French romance of *Aucassin and Nicolette*. The story goes that Aucassin, a young knight, falls in love with Nicolette, a beautiful slave girl, who has been bought as a child and reared by a viscount. Aucassin's father opposes the love match and causes Nicolette to be imprisoned in a castle and Aucassin to be thrown into a dungeon. Nicolette escapes through a window and goes out through the garden to the barred window of Aucassin's dungeon. As the lovers are talking, some soldiers, who have orders to slay Nicolette, appear, and she flees to a dark forest near by. Here some days later Aucassin finds her in a beautiful bower of leaves and ferns which she has made for herself. Later the lovers are separated, each being carried off in a different direction across the sea. Aucassin reaches his home and becomes lord of his father's estate. Nicolette is taken to Carthage, where she discovers that she is the daughter of a king. Her father wants to marry her to a noble prince, but she escapes, disguises herself as a minstrel, and goes back to Aucassin's castle. Here she sings a song of the lovely Nicolette who loved Aucassin, and Aucassin promises the minstrel a great reward if he will bring Nicolette to the castle. This, of course, the minstrel, who is none other than Nicolette, can easily do. So Aucassin and Nicolette are married and live happily for many years as lord and lady of the castle.

A PRONOUNCING LIST OF PROPER NAMES FOUND IN THE TEXT

Diacritically Marked According to Webster's International Dictionary, 1924; and Other Standard Authorities

Aiken (ā′kĕn)
Alan (ăl′ăn)
Aldeberan (ăl-dĕb′*ȧ*-răn)
Alexander (ăl-ĕg-zăn′dẽr)
Apache (ȧ-pä′chā)
Apocalypse (ȧ-pŏk′ȧ-lĭps)
Arcadia (är-kā′dĭ-ȧ)
Argonaut (är′gȯ-nôt)
Argonne (ȧr-gȯn′)
Arnold (är′nŭld)
Athenian (ȧ-thē′nĭ-ăn)
Assisi (ä-sē′zē)

Barrière (bă̤-rē-ãr′)
Baudelaire (bōd-lãr′)
Béarnais (bā-är-nā′)
Becquer (bĕk′ kẽr)
Beethoven (bā′-tō-vĕn)
Benét (bĕ-nā′)
Bodenheim (bō′ dĕn-hīm)
Booth (bōōth)
Bulmer (bŭl′mėr)
Burton (bûr′tŭn)

Cabell (kă′-bĕl)
Cairo (kā′rō)
Carlos (kär′lōs)
Carmi (kär′mī)
Cawein (kā-wīn′)
Cecil (sĕs′ĭl; sē′sĭl)
Ceres (sē′rēz)
Chancellorsville (chăn′sĕl-ẽrz-vĭl)
Charlemagne (shär′lė-mān)
Chateaubriand (shȧ-tō-brē-äɴ′)
Chopin (shȯ-păɴ′)
Clésinger (klā-zăɴ-zhā′)
Conrad (kŏn′răd)
Crabbe (krăb)
Cripple Creek (krĭp′l krēk)
Croce (krō′ chĕ)
Cynthia (sĭn′thĭ-ȧ)
Cytherea (sĭth-ẽr-ė′ȧ)

Damian (dā′mĭ-ăn)
Dawson (dô′sŭn)
Dayton (dā′tŭn)
Delphi (dĕl′ fī)
Deptford (dĕt′ fẽrd)
Donegal (dŏn-ė-gôl′)
Don Quixote (dŏn kwĭk′ sȯt)
Spanish (dȯn kė-hō′tā)

Egeria (ė-jē′rĭ-ȧ)
Eldorado (ĕl-dȯ-rä′dō)
Ellicott (ĕl′ĭ-kŏt)
Ellis (ĕl′ĭs)
Emerson (ĕm′ẽr-sŭn)
Euclid (ū′ klĭd)
Euripides (u̇-rĭp′ ĭ-dēz)

Faerie (fā′ẽr-ĭ)
Falmouth (făl′mŭth)
Falstaff (fôl′ stȧf)
Ficke (fĭ′ kĕ)
Finney (fĭn′ĭ)
Flammonde (flăm-mŏnd′)
Flaubert (flō-bâr′)
Fordham (fōr′ dăm)
Francis (frăn′ sĭs)
Francesca (frän-chĕs′ kä)
François (frän-swä′)
Froissart (frwä-sär′)

Galsworthy (gôlz′ wûr-thĭ)
Garland (gär′lănd)
Gascon (găs′ kŏn)
Glanvill (glăn′ vĭl)
Gloriana (glō-rĭ-ā′nȧ)
Gnostics (nŏs′ tĭks)
Graham (grā′ăm)
Guiney (gī′nĭ)

Hamlin (hăm′ lĭn)
Harris (hăr′ ĭs)
Hawkins (hô′ kĭnz)

Hawthorne (hô′ thôrn)
Heine (hī′nẽ)
Henri (äɴ rē′)
Hergesheimer (hêr′ gĕs-hī-mẽr
Hero (hē′rō)
Hervey (här′ vĭ)
Hildegarde (hĭl′ dĕ-gärd)
Hogarth (hō′gärth)
Hodgson (hŏj′sọn)
Holyrood (hō′lĭ-rūd)
Hovey (hŭv′ĭ)
Hosea (hō-zē′ȧ)
Huneker (hŭn′ĕ-kẽr)

Imogen (ĭm′ȯ-jĕn)
Israfel (ĭz′r*ȧ*-fēl; ĭz′r*ȧ*-fĕl)

Jan Paderewski (yän pȧ-dĕ-rĕf′skė)
Jan Vermeer (yän fẽr-mār′)
Jerusalem (jė-rōō′s*ȧ*-lĕm)
Justina (jŭs-tī′ nȧ)

Leander (lė-ăn′dẽr)
Lethe (lē′ thē)
Lhasa (läs′ä)
Lindsay (lĭn′ zĭ)
Lodi (lō′dī)
Louvre (lōō′vr)
Lucifer (lū′sĭ-fẽr)

Kreymborg (krām′ bôrg)

Magdalen (măg′dȧ-lĕn)
Mallarmé (mȧ-lȧr-mā′)
Mangan (măng′ găn)
Manistee (măn-ĭs-tē′)
Markham (mär′kăm)
Marlowe (mär′lō)
Meigs (mĕgz)
Mickiewicz (mĭts-kyā′ vĭch)
Millay (mĭ-lā′)
Millet (mē-lĕ′; mē-lā′)
Morley (môr′lĭ)
Mozart (mō′zärt)
Miniver (mĭn′ĭ-vẽr)

Neihardt (nī′ härt)
Nicholas (nĭk′ȯ-l*ȧ*s)
Nicean (nī-sē′*ă*n)

Oswego (ŏs-wē′gō)
Owens (ō′ĕnz)

Paganini (pä-gä-nē′nē)
Pater (pā′tẽr)
Pavlov (päv′lôf)
Pere (pâr)
Pevensey (pĕv′ĕn-sĭ)
Piccadilly (pĭk′*ȧ*-dĭl-ĭ)
Plato (plā′tō)
Pleiades (plē′ y*ȧ*-dēz)

Rio Grande (rē′ō grän′dā)
Rutledge (rŭt′lĕj)

St. Vincent (sānt vĭn′sĕnt)
Sanger (săng′ẽr)
Sartain (sär-tān′)
Schönberg (shô*n*-bârg′)
Seattle (sė-ăt′l)
Shelley (shĕl′ĭ)
Socrates (sŏk′rȧ-tēz)
Stanley (stăn′lĭ)
Stendhall (stäɴ dȧl′)
Stéphane (stĕf′*ȧ* nē)
Stoics (stō′ĭks)

Taj Mahal (tăzh mȧ-häl′)
Talleyrand (tăl′ĭ-rănd)
Tallahassee (tăl-*ȧ*-hăs′ė)
Tampico (täm-pē′kō)
Texarkana (tĕk-sär-kăn′*ȧ*)
Toledo (tȯ-lē′dō)
Tudor (tū′dẽr)
Turgenev (tŏŏr-gĕn′yĕf)

Vachel (vā′chĕl)

Warsaw (wôr′sô)
Weir (wēr)
Wheelock (hwē′lŏk)
Windsor (wĭn′zẽr)
Wylie (wī′lĭ)

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